

# Concepts of Sikh Religion

G.S.Sidhu M.A

Publisher: Gurmat Bhawan Mandi Mullan Pur (Ludhiana)

# INDEX

<b><u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</u></b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
--------------------------------------	-----------------

<b><u>INTRODUCTION.....</u></b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
---------------------------------	-----------------

<b><u>FOREWORD .....</u></b>	<b><u>9</u></b>
------------------------------	-----------------

<b><u>OPINIONS .....</u></b>	<b><u>12</u></b>
------------------------------	------------------

<b><u>CHAPTER ONE.....</u></b>	<b><u>15</u></b>
--------------------------------	------------------

<b>GENESIS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
----------------------	-----------

<b><u>CHAPTER TWO.....</u></b>	<b><u>22</u></b>
--------------------------------	------------------

<b>HUKAM.....</b>	<b>22</b>
-------------------	-----------

2.1 NAAM.....	25
---------------	----

<b><u>CHAPTER THREE .....</u></b>	<b><u>27</u></b>
-----------------------------------	------------------

<b>ANHAD SHABAD .....</b>	<b>27</b>
---------------------------	-----------

3.1 THE MYSTICAL WORD .....	28
-----------------------------	----

3.2 WAHEGURU.....	29
-------------------	----

3.3 SURT –SHABAD:.....	32
------------------------	----

<b><u>CHAPTER FOUR.....</u></b>	<b><u>33</u></b>
---------------------------------	------------------

<b>KHAND .....</b>	<b>33</b>
--------------------	-----------

4.2 THE YOGI’S WAY:.....	34
--------------------------	----

4.3 THE PREDICAMENT .....	35
4.4 THE GURU'S WAY: .....	37
4.5 <i>NIRBAN</i> (SALVATION) .....	42
4.6 DASAM DUAR .....	42

## **CHAPTER FIVE.....45**

<b>SHABAD (WORD).....</b>	<b>45</b>
5.1 SHABAD GURU? .....	48
5.2 GURU .....	49
5.3 NEED OF A GURU.....	51

## **CHAPTER SIX.....55**

<b>GURU NANAK'S GURU .....</b>	<b>55</b>
6.1 SAYYAD HUSSAIN .....	56
6.2 ZINDA PEER .....	56
6.3 BHAGAT KABIR.....	58
6.4 RAMANAND / SANT REIN .....	61
6.5 CONCLUSION.....	61

## **CHAPTER SEVEN.....63**

<b>IS GRANTH SAHIB A GURU? .....</b>	<b>63</b>
7.1 THE PROOFS.....	64
7.2 AKHAND PAATH.....	66
7.3 MERIT (ꣳꣳ) OF AKHAND PAATH.....	68

## **CHAPTER EIGHT .....71**

<b>THE LIVING GURU .....</b>	<b>71</b>
8.1 LIVING GURU .....	74
8.2 THE HOLY BOOK.....	75
8.3 PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE GRANTH.....	77

## **CHAPTER NINE .....79**

<b>MEERI PEERI .....</b>	<b>79</b>
9.1 GURU GOBIND SINGH AND MILITANCY?.....	87

9.2 TANTRIC CONCEPT UNACCEPTABLE IN SIKHISM .....	93
9.3 MEERI PEERI IN MODERN TIMES .....	93

## **CHAPTER TEN .....95**

<b>CASTE.....</b>	<b>95</b>
10.1 WHAT THE GURUS DID TO OPPOSE CASTE PREJUDICE .....	97
10.2 CASTE TODAY .....	100
10.3 THE GURUS ACCUSED .....	101
10.4 CONTRIBUTION OF SIKHISM .....	102
10.5 GOTRAS.....	103

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN.....106**

<b>SIKH TO KHALSA .....</b>	<b>106</b>
11.1 SIKH .....	106
11.2 SINGH.....	108
11.3 KHALSA .....	108
11.4 GUR MATTA.....	112

## **CHAPTER TWELVE.....115**

<b>MIRACLES.....</b>	<b>115</b>
----------------------	------------

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN .....121**

<b>WORSHIP.....</b>	<b>121</b>
13.1 GODS AND GODDESSES .....	121
13.2 DID THE SIKH GURUS WORSHIP GODS AND GODDESSES? .....	123
13.3 CONCLUSION: .....	126

## **CHAPTER FOURTEEN .....132**

<b>SANT.....</b>	<b>132</b>
14.1 MODERN DAY SANTS .....	134
14.2 SANTS OR SWINDLERS? .....	138

## **CHAPTER FIFTEEN .....140**

<b>REVELATION.....</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>ORIGINALITY OF SIKHISM.....</b>	<b>144</b>
16.1 ORIGIN OF THE WORD HINDU?.....	145
16.2 DEFINITION OF HINDUISM? .....	146
16.3 IS SIKHISM A COPY OF HINDUISM? .....	146
16.4 VIEWS OF WESTERN WRITERS .....	157
16.5 A RELIGION IN ITS OWN RIGHT.....	158
 <b><u>CHAPTER SEVENTEEN .....</u></b>	<b><u>163</u></b>
 <b>THEY GAVE THEIR HEADS.....</b>	<b>163</b>
17.1 WHAT DOES IT MEAN? .....	163
17.2 THEIR HEADS WERE CHOPPED OFF .....	167
 <b><u>CHAPTER EIGHTEEN .....</u></b>	<b><u>169</u></b>
 <b>QUESTIONS.....</b>	<b>169</b>

## Acknowledgements

I am obliged to Mr. Haredev Singh Shergill editor Sikh Bulletin, Professor Balwinderpal Singh Editor Sada Virsa Sada Gaurav, and Mr. Karamjit Singh Aujla editor Sirjanhara for reading the manuscript and sending in suggestions. My grateful thanks go to Principal Ram Singh and Dr. Sarbjit Singh for suggesting valuable changes in the text. I am deeply indebted to Professor Gurmel Singh of U.S.A for reading the manuscript and adding a concise foreword to it.

As usual Mr Bakhtawar Singh Sehra deserves my grateful thanks for typesetting the text and for preparing a suitable title for the book. I am also grateful to him for arranging the distribution of the books and for storing the stock.

Dr. Amarpreet Singh Deol and the staff of Gurmat Bhawan Mandi Mullan Pur (Ludhiana) usually arrange the printing and transportation of the books throughout the world which is by no means an easy task. I am extremely obliged to them for undertaking so much work as a labour of love.

G.S.Sidhu

June 1, 2007

## Abbreviations

AGGS stands for Aad Guru Granth Sahib (The Holy book of the Sikhs)

SGPC stands Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar

SRM stands for Sikh Rehat Maryada

## Introduction

I received my preliminary education in Urdu and Persian because in my school days they were the only languages taught in schools other than English, which was introduced at Secondary level. Whatever information about Sikhism or the Sikh Gurus reached us was through hearsay or through traditional *Gianis* and *Saints*. It was mostly mythical and we liked it because it eulogized our Gurus as the miracle performers. We had no access to the original sources, which were in Gurmukhi script. In 1947, when I was to appear in my matriculation examination, the country was divided into India and Pakistan. Panjabi and Hindi took the place of Urdu and Persian as official languages of the Panjab and India, respectively. With Urdu and Persian as my background languages I stood no chance of getting an employment and became virtually illiterate overnight. It was then that I learnt Panjabi and Hindi at home through my own efforts. Although I had learnt to read and write in these languages, my comprehension had not developed much.

At college we studied all our courses in English. In the first two years I had ample time to spare so I started reading books in Panjabi and eventually appeared in Giani (Hons.in Panjabi) as a private candidate obtaining 13<sup>th</sup> position in the Panjab University. Later I passed the Bhushan Examination in Hindi. Soon I started doing my M.A. in Panjabi and passed obtaining first class marks. These successes not only encouraged me to pass my M.A. in English in good second class but also resulted in putting me in touch with Gurbani. Now I had the opportunity to equip myself with *Gurbani* through Panjabi and English sources and to rationalize the interpretation of concepts imbibed over the years.

In 1965 I resigned from my job as a Languages Officer in Punjab and settled in Britain. It was then that I felt the need to clarify the *Gurmat* concepts for my own sake and to pass them on to my children. I founded the Sikh Missionary Society and started learning *Gurbani* concepts side by side explaining them to the next generation. This book is an attempt to express how I have internalised some of the concepts myself. The reader has every right to differ with my expositions. Since it is an expression of my own understanding of beliefs; I remain open to constructive suggestions and appropriate corrections by the more knowledgeable people.

It is not possible to discuss all concepts in a small book like this. I have therefore taken up only a few that needed attention. If this book finds favour with the readers, I will feel encouraged to write about other concepts, which equally need clarification for my own spiritual benefit as well as for others. I invite criticism from the Sangat and seek help in correcting any mistakes that I may inadvertently have made in these pages. Suggestions and corrections will be gratefully acknowledged.

G.S.Sidhu  
January 3,2007



## Foreword

A sudden rise in fundamentalism among the world religions has become a dilemma for future generations. It is often exercised by the people whose existence and subsistence are dependent upon the orthodoxy of their respective religions. The root cause of conflicts is more often economical than religious in nature. Whatever the causes may be, the fact remains that fundamentalism has endangered the lives of common and innocent people of all walks of life. Therefore, it becomes imperative and important to enlighten people, particularly the younger generation, about the basic tenants of various world religions in this postmodern era of confusion and chaos. Mr. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu took up this gigantic task some years ago. His current book, *“Concepts of Sikh Religion”*, is a timely step in the right direction.

Mr. Sidhu is not a novice in the field of religious studies, he has already written books such as *Sikh Religion and Science*, *Sikh Religion and Women*, and a conceptually related book, *Panjab and Panjabi*. The contents of these books are thoughtfully planned and presented in such a way that even the common reader can grasp them with ease. In *Sikh Religion and Science*, Mr. Sidhu argues that, *“Science and religion in tandem can become a greater force to liberate the mind and help the humans to a fuller and better understanding of reality. It is therefore imperative that knowledge of both is imparted to our next generation and nurtured with equal enthusiasm.”* In this age of feminism and women liberation, he remarked, *“A society owes much more to its women than to men, and it is commonly believed that ‘behind every successful man is a woman’. Therefore, a society that does not value its women does so at its peril and is likely to suffer sooner or later.”* (*Sikh Religion and Women*)

The contents of the present book, *Concepts of Sikh Religion*, are selected with meticulous care, and arranged in a coherent sequence. The thoughtful presentation of subject matter helps the reader to grasp the evolution of Sikh philosophy with clarity and ease. Such a deep religious subject

matter is made interesting and understandable with the usage of practical and simple language. The author begins with the relatedness of science and genesis of religious thought and then directly indulges into the explorations of the core of Sikhism called *Naam*. Sikhism is the religion of *Naam* employing the self-sustained expression of God's existence. In other words, God cannot be personified; *Naam* is the symbol of God's immanent manifestation through *Shabad* (word). In a figurative language, the "Word" becomes reincarnation of God in Guru Granth Sahib--the Holy Scripture of Sikhs. The author extends at a great length the discussion about the interrelationship of trilogy of Sikh philosophy inherent in the maxim, God-Word-Universe, and thus charts the essence of religiosity of Sikhism.

The evolution of *Naam* into *Shabad* and *Shabad* into *Shabad Guru* brings out the genius of Sikh Gurus in developing Sikhism. The author reinforces the Sikh religious ideology that "the Guru is the source of *Shabad* or spiritual knowledge, '*the Word is the Guru and the Guru is the Word*' as it is said in Gurbani". The Great Guru Nanak (1469 A.D.) was the primordial manifestation of God's Word that laid down the tenets of Sikhism. Mr. Sidhu's book beautifully relates the role of all the Sikh Gurus in developing and codification of Sikh philosophy embodied in "Guru Granth Sahib". Importantly, it explains the process of transformation of a 'Sikh' of Guru Nanak into the 'Singh' of Guru Gobind Singh, and their interrelatedness in carving the evolution of Khalsa.

Guru Nanak's spiritual ideology of Piri (ਪੀਰੀ) is depicted in the following couplets.

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ।  
ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨)

*"If you yearn to play the game of love, step on to my path carrying your head on the palm of your hand. And, once you set your foot on this path, you lay down your head, and never flee from your duty". (GGS. P.1412)*

This spirit of martyrdom was promulgated into the Miri-Piri concept (Sikh doctrine of politics and religion) by Guru Hargobind Ji. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and final master of Sikhism, gave a practical shape to this doctrine and infused its spirit into his 'Khalsa'. In the process of transformation of the Miri-Piri concept, a 'Sikh' became a 'Singh'. The distinctions among the concepts of 'Sikh' and 'Singh' along with 'Sehajdhari Sikh' and 'Khalsa' are also presented in this book for the convenience of common readers of Sikhism.

Towards the conclusion, the author has presented some subjects of general interest such as worship, originality of Sikhism, and has included the answers to commonly asked questions. This has made the book more interesting for both Sikh and non-Sikh readers. S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu really deserves appreciation for producing a marvelous book interpreting the basic concepts of Sikh religion for the younger generation.

Dr. Gurmel Singh Sidhu,  
Professor California State University,  
Fresno, CA. USA.

## Opinions

“*Concepts of Sikh Religion*” is the latest in a series of pamphlets and books written by S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu. I first came across his prolific writings in English on Sikh religion at the offices of the Sikh Missionary Society in Southall (England) when I went there in 1992 to obtain a volume of AGGS. It was refreshing to find so many pamphlets and booklets on various topics of every day concern in the life of a Sikh, in English. In 1996 when my involvement with the Sikh religion deepened and scarcity of materials in English for our young people growing up in the western world became obvious I remembered my visit to the Society’s offices four years earlier and sought out S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu and requested him to expand upon the booklets that I had come across four years earlier in the format of books for the Sikh youth who were not well versed in Panjabi. He had already done some work on that line and he agreed to our request. Of the many books that he has written we were fortunate to have been able to publish four: *Sikh Religion and Christianity*; *Sikh Religion and Islam*; *An Introduction to Sikhism*; and *Panjab and Panjabi*, for distribution by K. T. F. of N. A. Inc. It is individuals like S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu who have kept the flame of Sikhi burning when organizations such as SGPC who were specifically created for that task have not only miserably failed but have also indulged in practices harmful to Sikhi with its publication of anti-gurmat books such as Gurbilas Patshahi 6 and support of spurious writings such as the so called Dasam Granth. Sikh *qaum* is fortunate to have persons like S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu. We wish him good health and long life to keep on serving the *qaum* that gave him his identity.

Hardev Singh Shergill,

Editor Sikh Bulletin.

President, Khalsa Tricentennial Foundation of North America Inc.,  
California, U.S.A.

23.1.2007

I am thankful to Mr.Sidhu for giving me a chance to go through the manuscript of his book on "*Concepts of Sikh Religion*". In this book he has tried to explain the in-depth mystical information about Sikh Religious concepts. Normally we find literal translation of mystical words and phrases and once that is back translated, the meanings are completely changed. He has really put a lot of effort in conveying the real concept of Gurbani and that too in English. This shows his in-depth knowledge of Gurbani as well as his ability to translate the Sikh concepts into a foreign language. In this attempt his knowledge of other religions and sects has helped a lot in conveying the differences of Sikh religion from others.

What captivates the reader is the fact that he has very ably removed most of the misconceptions created in the Sikh history as well as interpretation of Gurbani with copious references.

May *Akal Purkh* Grant Mr.Sidhu health and strength to continue this noble service for a long time to come.

Dr. Sarbjit Singh  
Bombay .22.3.2007

Mr. G.S.Sidhu, the author of this book, is not only a scholar of Sikh tenets but a dedicated Sikh as well. His knowledge of various languages and religions helps him delve deep into the spirit of religion and his analytic approach clarifies the issues thoroughly for the general reader.

Principal Ram Singh Kular  
Chief Organiser,  
Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle  
Ludhiana.

Sardar G.S.Sidhu is a well-known writer on Sikhism. He is a well-read true intellectual Sikh with a vast experience in history and philosophy of Sikhism. His present book “*Concepts of Sikh Religion*” is a very useful handbook for research scholars and ordinary readers. The book is written in a nice readable style and scores of references have been quoted to substantiate the point of view he subscribes to. Questions and answers given in the last chapter further add to the beauty of the book and increase its usefulness. This can be a very good source book for students of religious studies. I feel it should be produced in Gurmukhi script as well. May the Almighty bless the author.

Professor Balvinderpal Singh  
Editor  
Sada Virsa Sada Gaurav

“ *Concepts of Sikh Religion*” is a valuable book on Sikhism deciphering and decoding a number of Sikh concepts. Mr. Sidhu’s vision and research have here combined to present a very vast spiritual and religious wealth to the reader. Anybody reading this book will feel being escorted to the ultimate truth of Sikhism. The Author’s vast knowledge of the subject deserves full appreciation. It can prove a very good source book for the next generation of the Sikhs and I hope that Mr. Sidhu will continue producing such useful literature.

Karamjit Singh. Aujla,  
Gen. Secretary, Sirjanhara  
International Sikh Confederation  
Ludhiana.

## Chapter One

### Genesis

From time immemorial human beings have been trying to understand how the universe came into existence and whether there is a creator behind it. Scientists, prophets and thinkers have theorised about this but this complex question is still not considered fully and satisfactorily answered.<sup>1</sup>

The ideas expressed by the Sikh Gurus about the universe are very close to the modern thought on the matter. According to the Sikh Gurus there was nothing (void)<sup>2</sup> in the beginning except utter darkness. The sun, the moon, and the stars etc did not exist<sup>3</sup> only God existed in trance (non-attributed form ਨਿਰਗੁਣ).<sup>4</sup> Then God decided to manifest Himself.<sup>5</sup> He gave himself a name (Truth) and created Nature with a big sound (Shabad). Immediately rivers of energy and consciousness (life forms and ideas, emotions etc)<sup>6</sup> began to flow. Whatever we see in the Universe is the transformation of God's self-manifested divine energy (ਸੈਭੰ).

<sup>1</sup> "The reality of the Supreme is not a question to be solved by a dialectic, which without personal experience can not give us conviction. Only spiritual experience can provide us with proofs of the existence of the spirit." (Dr.S.Radha Krishnan 'Bhagvad Gita' 1960 edition)

<sup>2</sup> ਸੁੰਨਹੁ ਧਰਤਿ ਅਕਾਸ ਉਪਾਏ ॥ ਸੁੰਨੇ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਗ ਸਥਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੭). Scientists have now peeped inside the Atom and confirm that inside is empty space (void). Scientists also believe something mysterious is there in nature which exerts force, controls motion and binds atoms together. The Sidhs also believed that the Universe developed from void. ਸੁਨਯ ਕੇ ਹੋ ਭਾਈ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਾ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ॥ ਸੁੰਨ ਬੈਂ ਬੁਲ ਉਤਪੰਨਾ (ਚੌਰੰਗੀ ਨਾਬ-ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਤ) "ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਦੀ ਇਛਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਕ ਆਂਡੇ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹੋਇਆ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਧਰਤੀ, ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਬਣ ਗਏ" (ਮਨੂ ਸਿਮਰਤੀ ਪਿ ੧ ਸ:੮) )" ਬ੍ਰਹਮ+ਅੰਡ= ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ

<sup>3</sup> ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੰਧੂਕਾਰਾ॥ ਧਰਣਿ ਨ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ॥ ਨਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਨ ਚੰਦੁ ਨ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਲਗਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੫)

<sup>4</sup> ਕੇਤੇ ਜੁਗ ਵਰਤੇ ਗੁਬਾਰੈ॥ ਤਾਤੀ ਲਾਈ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰੈ ॥ ਧੰਧੂਕਾਰ ਨਿਰਾਲਮ ਬੈਠਾ ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਧੰਧ ਪਸਾਰਾ ਹੋ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨੪) "ਅਰੰਭ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਅਵਿਅਕਤ (ਬ੍ਰਹਮ) ਸੀ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਹੋਈ। ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਆਪ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਸਨੂੰ 'ਸਵਯੰਭੂ' ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੀ ਉਚਿਤ ਹੈ। (ਤੈਤ੍ਰਯਾ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਧ II.vii) ਨਾ ਥਾ ਕੁਛ ਤੋ ਖੁਦਾ ਥਾ, ਕੁਛ ਨਾ ਹੋਤਾ ਤੋ ਖੁਦਾ ਹੋਤਾ ॥ ਡਬੋਇਆ ਮੁਝ ਕੇ ਹੋਨੇ ਨੇ, ਨਾ ਮੈਂ ਹੋਤਾ ਤੋ ਕਿਆ ਹੋਤਾ (ਮਿਰਜਾ ਗਾਲਿਬ).

<sup>5</sup> ਤਿਸ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਾ ਕਰੇ ਬਿਸਥਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੪) ਤੂੰ ਪੇਡੁ ਸਾਖ ਤੇਰੀ ਫੁਲੀ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਸੂਖਮ ਹੋਆ ਅਸਥੂਲੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨)

<sup>6</sup> (੧) ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਰਚਿਓ ਨਾਉ । ਦੁਯੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਾਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੩). ਏਕਸ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਦੂਜਾ ਹੂਆ ਏਕੋ ਵਰਤੇ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਬੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੪੨) ਆਪੋ ਆਪ ਉਪਾਇਕੋ ਆਪੋ ਅਪਣਾ ਨਾਉ ਧਰਾਇਆ (ਭ: ਗੁਰਦਾਸ

The infinite patterns of energy created infinite forms related to each other in essence. Just as water can manifest itself in snow, ice, steam, rain, clouds and sleet etc so are myriads of forms one and many. At the level of energy therefore, everything is eternally connected with everything else like drops of water in the ocean.<sup>7</sup> It is in this sense that we are within God and God is within us.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, we de-link ourselves from the essence and like a frog in a well, remain oblivious to the truth, and thus ensnare ourselves in ego (*Haumain*).

This process of *Nirgun* (un-manifested) God becoming *Sargun* (manifested God) is explained through different allegories. As the spider draws its thread out of itself and is the master of the web it produces, as the shrubs and plants grow from the earth and as the hair grows on the bodies of living beings so is the universe formed out of the imperishable immortal God.<sup>9</sup>

---

ੴ.੨) He manifested Himself and identified Himself as cosmos. In the cosmos He created nature and through nature began watching His creation happily. The scientists call this sound “Big Bang (immensely big sound)”

(੨) ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰਿਆਉ (ਜਪੁਜੀ)॥ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਵੇ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਹੋਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੪) “All expansion resulted from one sound.” ਇਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ ਪਸਾਉ ਕਰਿ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਅਕਾਰ ਪਸਾਰਾ ॥ ਪਉਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੇ ਧਰਤਿ ਅਗਾਸੁ ਧਰੇ ਨਿਰਧਾਰਾ ॥ (ਭਾ: ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ੬.੪)

<sup>7</sup> ਏਹੁ ਪਰਪੰਚੁ ਖੇਲੁ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਕਰਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤੇ ਸਭ ਕਲ ਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਸੂਤੁ ਵਰਤੇ ਜੁਗ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸੂਤੁ ਖਿਚੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੦੭) All this worldly drama is set in motion by the Creator Lord; He has infused His almighty strength into all. The thread of the One Lord runs through the world; when He pulls out this thread, the One Creator alone remains.

<sup>8</sup> ਏਕੋ ਮਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਰਬ ਮਹਿ ਏਕਾ ਏਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਿਖਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੦) ਨਾਨਕ ਰਵਿਆ ਹਭ ਥਾਇ ਵਣਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣਿ ਰੋਮਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੬) “ਹਰਿ ਮਹਿ ਤਨੁ ਹੈ ਤਨ ਮਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਹੈ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਸੋਇ ਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੦)

<sup>9</sup> ਤੂੰ ਪੇਡੁ ਸਾਖ ਤੇਰੀ ਫੂਲੀ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਸੂਖਮ ਹੋਆ ਅਸਥੂਲੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨) ਆਪਹਿ ਸੂਖਮ ਆਪਹਿ ਅਸਥੂਲ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੩੬) ਸੋਈ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਸੋਈ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਥਾਪੈ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਦੁਹ ਮਿਲਿ ਏਕੈ ਕੀਨੋ ਨਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੭) ਏਕੈ ਪਰਗਟ ਏਕੈ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਏਕੈ ਪ੍ਰਧੂਕਾਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੧੫)



Having thus created Nature He planted Himself (became attributed ਸਰਗੁਣ) in it like an artist imbedding his identity in his art or the spreading of the sun's rays.<sup>10</sup> Nature was a form of energy endowed with three fundamental properties,<sup>11</sup> which came into action. They were Light (ਜੋਤ), Sound (ਸ਼ਬਦ), and the Directive principle or law (ਹੁਕਮ) as the controlling factor of the creation.

Energy has the property to transform itself from one form to another. Light energy (ਜੋਤੀ) changed into Matter<sup>12</sup>, which had two main properties of Sanyog (unification or combination) and Viyog (alienation or decomposition).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> ਜਿਉ ਪਸਰੀ ਸੂਰਜ ਕਿਰਣਿ ਜੋਤਿ, ਤਿਉ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਓਤ ਪੋਤਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭੭) ਸਤਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਭ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੪) ਸਤਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਨ ਕੋਊ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫੦) ਜਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਮਹਿਅਲਿ ਪੂਰਿਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ, ਅਨਿਕ ਭਾਤਿ ਹੋਇ ਪਸਰਿਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੬)॥ “No art can exist either in form, colour, sound, speech or movement which is not in the first place inspired by nature.” (The Waverley Encyclopaedia Vol.1 Page 343)

<sup>11</sup> ਏਕਾ ਮਾਈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵਿਆਈ ਤਿਨਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭) Here ਮਾਈ means Nature not *Maya* as some people interpret this word.

<sup>12</sup> ਖਾਕ ਨੂਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਆਲਮ ਦੁਨੀਆਇ । ਅਸਮਾਨ ਜਿਮੀ ਦਰਖਤ ਆਬ ਪੈਦਾਇਸਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੩) He created the universe by infusing his light in the dust. The sky, the earth, the vegetation and the water are all created through this process. ਜੋਤੀ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਧਰਿਆ ਪਸਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੭੨ ) ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩) ਕਾਇਆ ਮਹਲੁ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਪਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੫੬) ਘਟਿ ਦੀਪਕੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੬)

<sup>13</sup> Sanyog and Viyog are the sources of life, gravity, magnetism, and potential and kinetic energy. ਸੰਜੋਗ ਵਿਜੋਗ ਦੋਇ ਕਾਰ ਚਲਾਵੈ ..... (ਜਪੁਜੀ) Fifth century Greek philosopher Empedocles called them “love” and “hate” forces which constructed the world.

Sound (ਸ਼ਬਦ) energy is creative, dynamic and intuitive force, which produced vibration (motion or movement)<sup>14</sup> both at physical and mental level and became the cause of the various forms of creation<sup>15</sup>. Vibration enlivens everything, helps reproduction, creates mind in living matter and provides sustenance. The end of motion is death. The Scientists believe that all matter is the solidified form of energy. The sun, the moon, the stars, the electromagnetic waves, light rays, photons etc are all one or the other form of energy. The source of this energy that spread through the universe is consciousness, which in spiritual terms is known as Supper Power (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ=God). In other words we can say that God (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ) is omnipresent but like energy invisible.

According to the psychologists and neurologists, human mind is the centre of consciousness and emotion. It is through this centre that we can remain in contact with the inner world as well as the outer world. Therefore, sound (Shabad which got imbedded in us) keeps us nearer God. The reason why music appeals to us is that it is a gift from God, a part of our sensory constitution, and is related to the first word-sound of God, which resulted in all creation. An anonymous proverb captures the sense rightly. It states, “When a man lives with God, his voice shall be sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn”. Music lifts our soul.<sup>16</sup> *“Sound must have been to the primitive man something incomprehensible and therefore mysterious and magical.” (A Short History of Music).* In order to sow the seed in the soil, it is first softened by ploughing and then the seed is sown. Similarly to sow the seed of Naam (Gurbani), the mind is softened by music.

<sup>14</sup> The word ਸ਼ਬਦ is from Sanskrit root ਸ੍ਰਿ, which means moving or flowing. The universe is always in motion and is changing every moment. What our eyes see is not therefore real. Unfortunately for most part of our lives we remain attached to this unreality. The only real thing is our soul, which is a part of God (ਅਰ-ਕੂਹ ਮਿਨ ਅਮਰਿ ਰੱਬੀ-ਕੁਰਾਨ). Since God is immortal, our soul, which is a part of God, does not die.

<sup>15</sup> Forms cannot exist without sound because it is sound that converts matter into different shapes. Experiments were conducted in 1971 on the ‘healing nature of sound’. Sand was placed on a plate vibrated by sound waves. It was discovered that as the frequency of the sound changed the sand grains arranged themselves into different shapes depending on the frequency of the sound. Certain vibrations produced human-like figures. When the same frequency was applied, the same shape returned. The scientists thus proved the formation of planets, solar systems and galaxies from sound. For further information consult “Cymatics” by Vintage books New York.

<sup>16</sup> “ਚਿਤਿਹਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਸਮਾਇ ਤ ਹੋਵੈ ਰੰਗ ਘਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੨)” “When one is immersed in God then he experiences supreme bliss”. Some ancient scholars of Indian music have claimed that listening to music cures many diseases. It may be so but the Sikh Gurus have instructed the Sikhs to concentrate on the ‘Word’ rather than on the music “ਦੂਖ ਰੋਗ ਸੰਤਾਪ ਉਤਰੇ ਸੁਣੀ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ”. The sanctity and sweetness of Gurbani coupled with music provides ambrosial intoxication to the devotees leading to spiritual propinquity with God.

The all-powerful primordial directive principle created thought, moral force and organisation. It is God's universally acknowledged authority (Law ਹੁਕਮ, ਰਜਾ, ਭਾਣਾ).<sup>17</sup> It permeates the Universe as the driving force behind it.

Religious men describe the Big Bang sound that created everything as "Word" (*Shabad*). Word did not exist independently. It was the self-expression of God.<sup>18</sup> Almost all religions therefore acknowledge that the 'Word' (*Shabad*) was God. Different names have been given to 'Word' (*Shabad*) by different religions but they all agree that if man could tune to this primordial word (ਸ਼ਬਦ or ਨਾਦ), he would be able to understand the mysteries of God and reach Him.<sup>19</sup>

The way to the 'Word' lies through the three divine creations: of Light, Sound and the law (ਹੁਕਮ) mentioned above. There are people who try to approach God through Light (Fire ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼) and consider light as sacred.<sup>20</sup> They worship Fire, burn candles, or worship other forms of fire to propitiate God.

Some people worship God's creative power<sup>21</sup> and some like the Turkish Dervishes worship motion by going round and round themselves. The Buddhists also worship motion by keeping the drums moving. Some try to approach God through dancing and singing to the deities.

<sup>17</sup> ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕਰੇ ਆਕਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੦) ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸਾਜੇ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਢਾਂਚੇ ਏਕ ਚਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਲਖ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੯)

<sup>18</sup> In Christianity the "word" is understood to have assumed the body of Christ. "And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (Bible John 1:14) "O Bharta great Prakirti is the womb wherein I cast my seed and from this are born all beings" (Krishna tells Arjuna in Gita XIV: 3) .In Sikhism *Shabad* is the source of everything ਉਤਪਤਿ ਪਰਲਉ ਸਬਦੇ ਹੋਵੈ ॥ ਸਬਦੇ ਹੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਵੈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਰਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਆਪੇ ਸਚਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਮਾਵਣਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭)

<sup>19</sup> Explaining the verse "ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਦੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦੰ" Vinoba Bhave writes, "ਇਸ ਪਦ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਜਾਦੂ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਲੱਗ ਸਕੇ। ਧਿਆਨ ਨਾਲ ਪਰਮੇਸ਼ਰ ਦੀ ਜੋ ਧੁਨੀ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦੇਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਧਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਫਲ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਦ ਆਖਦੇ ਹਨ, ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਫਲ ਵੇਦ ਹੈ।" (ਟੀਕਾ ਜਪੁਜੀ ਅਨੁਵਾਦਿਤ ਸੀਤਾ ਰਾਮ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫) ਜੋ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝੋਗਾ, ਉਹ ਸਤਿ ਸੂਪ ਹੋਏਗਾ (ibid P.27) ਭੁਗਤਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਦਇਆ ਭੰਡਾਰਣਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਵਾਜਹਿ ਨਾਦ ।

<sup>20</sup> Parsees worship Fire. Also there are hymns in the Rig Veda addressed to Fire. Such as "ਅਗਨੀਮੀਲੇ ਪਰੋਹਿਤੰਗ.....(ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ)  
"ਜੋਤਿ ਨੂੰ ਮੇਰੀ ਹੀ ਸਮਝੋ, ਮੇਰੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੀ ਸੂਰਜ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰੀ ਇਹੋ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਗਨੀ ਅਤੇ ਚੰਦ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ" (ਗੀਤਾ XV). It is for this reason that Hindu marriages are performed around fire.

<sup>21</sup> Hindus worship Shivling (Phallus of Shiva). The sex organ is considered creative.

The Sikh Gurus did not approve the above-mentioned beliefs and methods. They interpreted light as spiritual enlightenment (ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ) and require their followers to acquire knowledge.<sup>22</sup> They have stated time and again that human body is the abode of God and its full potential is realised through knowledge.<sup>23</sup> They, therefore, combined music (ਨਾਦ) with Word (ਵੇਦ=knowledge) as a gainful combination to attune with God.

Music is a mysterious divine influence, which stirs the heart to seek God. We all like to sing, hear songs or enjoy music. Spiritually enlightened people talk of hearing celestial music of the spheres (ਅਨਹੱਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ), which leads to God. When word (ਵੇਦ=ਗਿਆਨ) and music (ਨਾਦ) come together as in Gurbani, the human spirit is lifted to its spiritual heights.<sup>24</sup>

*“Music is the art of the prophets, the only part that can calm the agitation of the soul. It is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.”* (Martin Luther). The world is dull without divine music. A lullaby has a soothing effect on the child and helps the child to go to sleep because the lullaby is nearer to the celestial music, which was a part of the foetus when the child was taking shape in the womb. Scientific study has shown that the plants respond to music and grow better and that cows yield more milk listening to music.

In conclusion it can be said that life is nothing but multidimensional eternal consciousness temporarily imprisoned in physical bodies on the endless road to evolution. Since consciousness (energy) does not die, there is no death for life. The Guru says that humans can understand this mystery only through following the divine law. The law of God is God’s volition and cannot be fully expressed by the humans in any form.<sup>25</sup> The Guru has called it *“Hukam”* or command that must be obeyed without question.

<sup>22</sup> ਗਿਆਨ ਕਾ ਬਧਾ ਮਨੁ ਰਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੯)

<sup>23</sup> ਹਰਿ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਏਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਹੈ ਗਿਆਨਿ ਰਤਨਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੬) “ਸੋ ਨੂਰ ਹਾਂ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਤਨ ਵਿਚ ਜਲਵਾ ਹੈ ਅਰ ਜਿਸ ਨੂਰ ਕਰ ਇਹ ਤਨ ਗੁਲਜ਼ਾਰ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ, ਬੰਦਾ ਜੋ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ॥ ਜੋ ਬੰਦਾ ਹੋਕੇ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਅਰ ਹਿਰਸ ਤੇ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਮਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਹੈਵਾਨ ਦੀ ਨਿਆਈਂ ਹੈ ॥ (ਗਯਾਨ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ )

<sup>24</sup> “When I hear music I fear no longer, I am invulnerable, I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times, and the latest. (Thoreau) ਕਲਜੁਗ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਪਰਧਾਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੭੫), ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵਹ ਭਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੮)। Singing Gurbani hymns brings us closer to God.

<sup>25</sup> ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ, (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੨)



## Chapter Two

### Hukam

In the last chapter we discussed the creation of the universe and mentioned three attributes of the manifested God i.e. Light (ਜੋਤ), Sound (ਸ਼ਬਦ) and Law (ਹੁਕਮ), which overlap in their functions to a great extent because their source is one and the same (God).<sup>26</sup> These attributes of God have no existence separate from God or His manifested form ‘Word’ (Naad or Shabad), which represents all three of them for the living beings. The religious preceptors equate “Word” with God Himself. The mystical, vital, all-embracing, complete super dispensation of God is expressed in the moral world through His *Hukam*, which humans can understand and enjoy only through the Word.<sup>27</sup> He is immanent in everything through His *Hukam* and His authority is unquestionable. The Guru expresses all this in *Moolmantra*,<sup>28</sup> which represents one God, who is *Nirgun* (without attributes) in His primal aspect and is absolute, eternal, infinite, unborn, and without beginning or end. He is unknowable and has no definite identifiable attributes that humans can assess and evaluate except the three manifested ones through which he expressed Himself in His creation.

*Hukam* and *firman* are used in Gurbani as synonyms. They are derived from Persio-Arabic sources where they mean a ‘Command’. The Sikh Gurus have used *Hukam* to mean ‘divine ordinance’ or “Divine Will” which ensures physical and psychical harmony in the creation.

<sup>26</sup> ਚਹੁ ਦਿਸਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਹੁ ਦਿਸਿ ਨਾਮ ਪਤਾਲੈ ॥ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਾਚਾ ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਬੈਆਲੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੫) ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩) ਜੋਤਿ ਸਬੂਪੀ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਮਉਲੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੮੩)

<sup>27</sup> ਸਿਵ ਸਕਤਿ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਵਰਤਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੦) ਹੁਕਮਿ ਚਲਾਏ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਰਮੀ ਵਹੈ ਕਲਾਮ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪੧)

<sup>28</sup> The Mool mantra explains. God is One (unique). His name is Truth, He is the Creator. He is fearless and has no enmity with anyone. He is deathless; He does not take birth but exists by himself. He is the greatest and the bounteous.

It governs the microcosm as well as the macrocosm. It operates outwardly as well as inwardly in everything.<sup>29</sup> According to Mr. G.S.Talib “*It is the idealist's vision which sees a Divine purpose in everything, and finding the understanding of the mystery beyond the power of man, puts itself in the attitude of wonder and acceptance*”.

The concept of *Hukam* is one of the cardinal concepts of Sikhism and is therefore mentioned in the very first hymn (Japu) of the Holy Granth. *Hukam* has a liberating influence. Guru Nanak says, Understanding the *Hukam* (Divine law) releases one from his ego<sup>30</sup>. Human beings have the choice to follow or not to follow the Divine law (*Hukam*) and thus to either ‘regenerate’ or ‘degenerate.’<sup>31</sup>

Although all creation is subject to *Hukam*, it is not easy to define and understand this term.<sup>32</sup> And yet it is very important to understand *Hukam* because man's salvation is impossible without understanding it.<sup>33</sup> . It is the fundamental principle of life, an expression of the Will of the Conscious Being. Obedience of this law is called *Bhai* or *Bhow* (ਭੈ, ਭਉ)<sup>34</sup> and nothing is outside the pale of *Hukam*. When Gurbani says that man should live in fear of God, it means that man must obey the Divine *Hukam*. Understanding it is to understand the revelation of the nature of divinity. *Gurmukhs*, *Sadhus*, *Sants*, *Bhagats* try to understand it and reach different stages short of goal but a Guru is one who has reached the end of the road. *Reza* and *Bhana*, which mean Divine pleasure, are also used in Gurbani to explain *Hukam*. They mean whole-hearted acceptance of God's *Hukam*.

Just as it is difficult but not impossible for an ordinary person to understand the complications of the law of a country, it is difficult to understand the divine law (*Hukam*) of God unless one has tried one's best to learn it.

<sup>29</sup> ਹੁਕਮੇ ਸਾਜੇ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਢਾਹੇ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੬੧) ਹੁਕਮੇ ਹੀ ਸਭ ਸਾਜੀਅਨੁ ਰਵਿਆ ਸਭ ਵਣਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਣਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੯)

<sup>30</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧) ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਾ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਜਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੩)

<sup>31</sup> ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੋ ਨੇੜੇ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮)

<sup>32</sup> ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧) ਕਥਨਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਾਰ ॥

<sup>33</sup> ਹੁਕਮੁ ਮੰਨੇ ਸੋਈ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੫) “ਹੁਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਨੈ ਸੁ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਨੈ ਬੰਦਾ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੫੦)

<sup>34</sup> ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਵਣੁ ਵਹੈ ਸਦਵਾਉ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਕਵੈ ਵੇਗਾਰਿ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਬੀ ਭਾਰਿ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਇੰਦੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਸਿਰ ਭਾਰਿ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚੰਦੁ ॥ ਕੋਹ ਕਰੋਤੀ ਚਲਤ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਸੁਰ ਨਾਥ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਡਾਣੇ ਆਕਾਸ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ ॥ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਵਹਿ ਪੂਰ ॥ ਸਗਲਿਆ ਭਉ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਸਿਰਿ ਲੇਖੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਸਚੁ ਏਕੁ (੪੬੪) ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਭੁ ਆਕਾਰੁ ਹੈ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਸੋਇ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮੬)

Just as even trained lawyers sometimes go wrong, seekers of God's law too make mistakes and learn through their mistakes. Since *Hukam* is difficult to understand, the Guru has made it a bit easier to understand by calling it *Naam* (ਨਾਮ or ਨਾਉਂ).<sup>35</sup> Like *Hukam* "Naam" too is beyond description but we do know what it means. It is a part of the creative power of the Lord (Word) through which we can expect to attune with *Hukam*.

Our soul is the abode of God but our mind, being composed of five earthly elements, tends to remain attached to the world.<sup>36</sup> The actions of our mind bind us with earthly things and the emancipation from this situation is possible only through the Guru's guidance expressing divine Word.<sup>37</sup> Since our soul is always with us, the spiritually elevated people (*Saints*) always say, "God is within us."<sup>38</sup> So what is needed is to search diligently within.<sup>39</sup>

To get to God within we have to have self- health.<sup>40</sup> This is achieved by concentrating on Godly virtues (*Naam*) and by restraining our mind from too much involvement in worldly affairs. The Guru polishes man's soul to make it suitable for merger in the All-soul (God).<sup>41</sup> Therefore at the very start of the Holy Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak poses a very important question when he says, "How can the soul be purified and the wall of unreality removed?" Immediately after this the Guru also suggests an answer to this question by saying, "It is recorded with the soul that it must follow the spiritual law (*Hukam* ਹੁਕਮ)."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਦੀਆ ਬੁਝਾਇ ਜੀਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨) ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਭਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਨਾਮ ਦੀ ਪੀਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵਸਤੂ ਦਾ ਬੋਧ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਰਥ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ। ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਭੇਦ ਦੋ ਹਨ ਇਕ ਵਸਤੂਵਾਚਕ ਜੈਸੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ, ਬੈਲ ਪਹਾੜ ਆਦਿਕ, ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਵ-ਵਾਚਕ ਜੈਸੇ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ, ਕਰੋਰਤਾ, ਭਲਮਣਸਊ, ਭਰੋਪਣ ਆਦਿ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਨਾਮ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਬੋਧਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਭੀ ਹੈ" (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੯੭)

<sup>36</sup> ਆਤਮ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਮਹਿ ਆਤਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੩)॥ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਹੈ ਆਤਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੦) But our mind does not attune to God. Insead ਮਾਇਆ ਸੁਤ ਦਾਰਾ ਜਗਤ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਚੋਗ ਚੁਗੈ ਨਿਤ ਫਾਸੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੧੦) ਮਨੁ ਭੂਲੇ ਬਹੁ ਚਿਤੈ ਵਿਕਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੨)

<sup>37</sup> ਕਹਤੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਜੀਉ ਕਰਮ ਬੰਧੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭੇਟੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੮)

<sup>38</sup> ਪੁਰਖ ਮਹਿ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਸੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੁਕਰ ਮਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਛਾਈ ॥ ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਸੇ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਖੋਜਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬਤਾਈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੪) ਵਾ ਵੀ ਅਨੁਫਿਸਕਮ ਅਫਲਾ ਤੁਬਿਸਰੂਨ ( He is within. Can't you see? Quran 51:21)

<sup>39</sup> ਕੀਸਤ ਗੋਯਾ ਕੋ ਮੁਰਾਦਿ ਦਿਲ ਨ ਯਾਵਤ । ਹਰ ਕਸਿ ਬਾ ਨਫਸਿ ਖੁਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਗਜਬ = ਐਸਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਮਨ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈ ਲੜੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਮੁਰਾਦ ਨਾ ਪਾਈ ਹੋਵੇ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) ਬੰਦੇ ਖੋਜੁ ਦਿਲ ਹਰ ਰੋਜ ਨਾ ਫਿਰੁ ਪਰੇਸਾਨੀ ਮਾਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੭)

<sup>40</sup> The word ਸਵਸਥ (Health) is derived from Sanskrit root ਸਵ which means 'Self and ਅਸਥ or ਅਸਥਿਤ means stable. We are healthy only when our mind settles down and concentrates on itself (ਸਹਿਜ).

<sup>41</sup> ਜਿਸਤੇ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਸੋਈ ਫਿਰ ਹੋਆ (ਮ:ਪ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੯੩)॥ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੨)

<sup>42</sup> "ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ"? ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪) Again Guru Arjan Dev says, "ਸਿਮਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਧਰਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯੯) It is etched on your mind and body from the start that you should remain attached to the Lord. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਮਾਨੈ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਸਮਾਦਿਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੭)



## 2.1 Naam

In ordinary daily use of the language the word “*Naam*” means ‘Name’.<sup>43</sup> We give a name to something on the basis of our knowledge about its characteristics. When that name is heard we immediately know what or whom we are talking about. Such names can be called descriptive names.<sup>44</sup> About God’s undefined (ਨਿਰਗੁਣ-Nirgun) form we know nothing because God is ineffable (ਅਗੋਚਰ) and inaccessible. No descriptive name could be assigned to His *Nirgun* form; only an abstract name could be given. Different religious people therefore gave different names to *Nirgun* God. Guru Nanak gave Him the best name that he could think of. He called Him ਸੱਚ (Truth or Reality which transcends everything).<sup>45</sup>

Philosophers believe that the description of Truth can only be truth and nothing else. When God became *Sargun* (defined); He could not be anything new. Since Guru Nanak called undefined (ਨਿਰਗੁਣ) God Truth, He still retained the same name for the manifest (ਸਰਗੁਣ) God. In order to differentiate it from His *Nirgun* name Guru Nanak called His defined (ਸਰਗੁਣ) name Satnam (ਸਤਿਨਾਮ),<sup>46</sup> which means the Name given to Truth. Guru Arjan Dev explained the reason behind this by saying that “All tongues address Him through coined names (based on attributes) but his real name is still “Truth+ Naam”, (ਸਤਿਨਾਮ) the eternal name that existed even before the beginning of time.<sup>47</sup> Guru Nanak used this name at the beginning of his oft-sung hymn Japu, which lays the foundation of the Sikh Scripture.

---

<sup>43</sup> *Naam* also means the Guru’s word (eternal truth) or the ‘All pervading spirit’. *Naam* cannot be accurately defined. It is an emotional psychic or aesthetic feeling or an experience of God’s wonder.

<sup>44</sup> ਕਿਰਤਮ ਨਾਮ ਜਾਂ ਸਫਾਤੀ ਨਾਮ describing properities or qualities.

<sup>45</sup> ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧) । ਇਹੁ ਸਚੁ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਖਸਮ ਹੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੩)

<sup>46</sup> ਸਤਿਨਾਮ is the creative conscious energy which became the basis of the creation.

<sup>47</sup> ਕਿਰਤਮ ਨਾਮ ਕਥੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਜਿਹਬਾ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਤੇਰਾ ਪੁਰਾ ਪੁਰਬਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੮੩) . Coined names keep changing (in interpretation) as time passes. The name “Allah” was used for a statue in Mecca later it began to be used for God. The word “God” was the name of Teutonic gods and goddesses later it became a Christian God (Almighty), Jehovah was the name of a particular god of the Assyrians Later when they converted to Judaism, the name began to be used for Jewish God. But Truth (ਸੱਚ) does not change.

He stated, “God is one. His name is *Satnaam*”<sup>48</sup>. *Satnam* is not bound to space, time or human interpretation. It is beyond change, eternal and God’s unquestionable and indescribable uniqueness.

In Sikhism *Naam* is therefore considered the most important primordial universal principle (nature of God) directing and supporting the creation. It is creative, dynamic, immanent, and intuitive power, the cause of force, motion, growth, and disintegration, in fact everything. It creates, sustains and directs the manifest cosmos through its three attributes mentioned above. Divine *Naam* is thus the ocean of possibilities. “All creation is permeated with *Naam* and there is nothing without it”<sup>49</sup>. The Guru says that the real knot of Truth is undone for those who study Gurbani with a devoted and fully attuned mind. The Guru’s Shabad (Word)<sup>50</sup> opens the doors and the Shabad is called *Naam*. On account of this Sikhism is sometimes also called *Naam Marg* or the *Religion of Naam*.

---

<sup>48</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ. The word ਸਤਿ is derived from Sanskrit सत्, which means ‘strength, energy or power’.

The word also means ideal, true, primal or correct. According to Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਕਈ ਜਗਾ ਯ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸਿਹਾਰੀ ਲਗਾਈ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ (ਦੇਖੋ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੮). ਸਤਯ= ਸਤਿ

<sup>49</sup> “ਜੋਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਤਾ ਨਾਉ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੋ ਬਾਉ ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੪) “ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਸਗਲੇ ਜੰਤ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੪). In Arabic *Naam* is called *al-badi* (*The marvellous*). It is defined as the originator and the ocean of possibilities from which the tidal waves of revelation flow.

<sup>50</sup> “ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਖੋਲਾਈਅਨ੍ਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੪) ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੋਲੈ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ, ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਸਮਾਇਆ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੪) ਮਨ ਟਿਕ ਜਾਇ ਨਾਮ ਪਰ ਜਬੈ, ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਬੈ ॥ (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰੁਤ ੩ ਅਧਿਆਏ ੩੩)

## Chapter Three

### Anhad Shabad

As has been discussed earlier when God manifested Himself a “Word” or sound was produced.<sup>51</sup> Scientists and thinkers believe that the reverberations of that event are still going on and the hissing sound they catch through their instruments is a part of that original sound. Religious preceptors however tell us that this sound was God Himself and that we all have a part of this sound stored within us. Therefore to understand God it is necessary to attune to that sound within. The spiritually awakened people hear this sound themselves, acquire spiritual knowledge and understand the divine law. Then they live accordingly and try to convey the celestial sound (ਅਨਹਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ) through their own word or writings to their followers advising them to live under its spiritual influence.<sup>52</sup>

The Muslims claim that the Sound (Word) has been fully described in the Holy Quran and that the essence is contained in the Kalima (*Bismillah Ur Rehman Ur Rahim*), which if repeated, can lead to the mystical sound

<sup>51</sup> Most religious leaders describe this mystical celestial musical sound as ‘Limitless’ (ਅਨਹਦ, ਅਸੀਮ) “ਅਵਲੋ ਆਖਰ ਚੁੰ ਬੇਹਦ ਸੁਦ, ਜ ਅੰ ਸਬ ਨਾਮੇ ਚੁੰ ਅਨਹਦ ਸੁਦ” “The sound (ਅਨਹਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ) has no beginning and no end that is why it is called limitless” (Hazrat Shah Niaz). “The world is supposed to have been created by an initial sound when it emerged from the primordial abyss. It became light and little by little part of the light became matter. But the materialization was never absolutely complete because each material thing or object continued to retain more or less some of the sonorous substance out of which it was created.” (‘Music Therapy’ by Marius Schneider – Hutchinson London 1975) “Perhaps music is the only particle of the Divine essence that man has been able to capture” (Jaques Chailley). ਪੰਚੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਨਹਦ ਬਾਜੇ ਸੰਗੇ ਸਾਰਿਗਪਾਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੫੦) ਪੰਚ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਅਨਹਦ ਵਾਜੇ ਹਮ ਘਰਿ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੪). There are five spiritual stages (known as Khands) and in each stage the Anhad sound is heard in a different tune. At some places an indication of the sound has also been given in Guru Granth Sahib. For example, “ਪੰਚ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਿਰਮਾਇਲ ਬਾਜੇ ਢੁਲਕੇ (drum) ਚਵਰ (stringed instrument) ਸੰਖ (Conch) ਘਨ ਗਾਜੇ (thunder) (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੭੪). These sounds are astral and psychic not produced by any material instruments.

The Yogis call it ਅਨਹਤ ਨਾਦ (sound produced without friction) and try to hear it through yogic exercises. ਗੁਰਮਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਹ ਕੰਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਆਤਮ ਮੰਡਲ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ ॥ “ਨਾਮ ਅਭਯਾਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤ ਦੀ ਇਕਾਗਰਤਾ (ਸਮਾਧਿ) ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ”। (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੭)

<sup>52</sup> ਨਾਦਿ ਸਮਾਇਲੋ ਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟਿਲੇ ਦੇਵਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੭) ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਵਾਜਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਬਾਜੇ ਗਾਈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਾਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੪੨)

(Word) and therefore God.

Similarly the Hindus claim that all secrets of the ‘Word’ have been mystically copied into the Hindu scriptures and that the repetition of certain incantations of their scriptures (OM or Gayatri Mantra) can lead to the reality of the Anhad sound. The Sikh Gurus have recorded their findings in the Guru Granth Sahib. Since the hymns of the Guru Granth Sahib describe the divine “Word” or “Naam”, they themselves are divine and lead to God.<sup>53</sup> Sikhism advises Guru’s help in attuning to Anhad Shabad (ਅਨਹਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ) and outlines five stages (known as five Khands).

According to Sikhism the primordial sound is not a physical sound that we can hear with our ears. It is something, which can be felt only with our inner soul. The nature of this Sound can be related to all types of physical and spiritual phenomenon, which transcend our imagination.

### 3.1 The mystical Word

Mystical word (ਅਨਹਦ ਨਾਦ) <sup>54</sup> is the celestial ‘Word’ that created the Universe and all that is in it. In religious circles it is believed that consciousness can transcend time and space and become one with the Almighty through this Word. The Guru states that if this celestial mystical ‘Word’ is imbibed, it leads to a blissful stage (ਸਹਿਜ). At this stage there is no beginning or end and therefore no death.<sup>55</sup> The only condition is that this ‘Word’ should be firmly implanted in our heart but it is not easy to understand and internalise this ‘Word’ without the help of a true Guru.

Some Sikh Scholars believe that the mystical word (with all its attributes) is spread all through the Holy Granth and cannot be identified separately. Therefore it is necessary that the whole of Guru Granth Sahib should be read time and again as *Naam* to implant the ‘Word’ in our hearts. Others think that although it is gainful to read the whole Guru Granth Sahib, the *Mool mantra* (The preamble of Guru Granth Sahib) is the incantation that contains the essence of the divine “Word” and its repetition is sufficient.

<sup>53</sup> ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੫) ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਣਾ ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੫)

<sup>54</sup> The word ‘mystical’ is derived from ‘mu’, which means ‘to close’. When a person closes every avenue of sense perception to withdraw the mind into itself from external objects, he becomes worthy of receiving divine illumination. Mysticism is therefore “Withdrawing into self.” Since ‘self’ is a copy made in the image of God, the seeker can know all he desires to know through mysticism. Science exploits only the sense organs and reason. Mysticism is non-physical and transcends them.

<sup>55</sup> ਏਕੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਮੇਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਾਨਿ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਬਾਹੁਤਿ ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਆਵਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੫) ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੈ ਪਾਈਐ ਗੁਰ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧)

Yet others believe that “*Waheguru*”<sup>56</sup> is the simplified word, the repetition of which, brings in bliss and all other spiritual merits.<sup>57</sup> The intellectuals however argue that mere repetition of any ‘Word,’ however sacred, carries no merit. One should consciously understand and concentrate on what one repeats and why. Here we will discuss the oft repeated word “*Waheguru*” and try to understand what it means.

The more we try to understand the world around us, the more wonderstruck we are. How a seed sprouts, how the big trees transport tons of water upward daily supplying every leaf, how a flower produces fragrance and colour and above all how the planets in the cosmos keep to their assigned distances and routes. The Divine life-current pulsates almost everywhere. Wonder of wonders is that if an atom, the minutest (subtle) particle of matter, is smashed it turns out to be empty space with invisible electrons revolving around an imaginary centre. If one has the time to read nature one cannot fail to be wonder struck. When one is wonder-struck with God’s creation and utters “*Waheguru*” (You are wonderful Lord) in appreciation of His benedictions only then “*Waheguru*” assumes significance. Mere repetition without concentration on the wonders of God carries no merit.<sup>58</sup>

### 3.2 Waheguru

We humans are like a tiny speck of dust in the vast ocean of expanse and are not capable of thoroughly appreciating or imagining the seen and unseen wonders of nature. We cannot comprehend the infinite creation and the creator.

<sup>56</sup> ਮਨ ਬੁਧਿ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵਡਾ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਧਨਯਤਾ ਯੋਗਯ ਕਰਤਾਰ. “ਕੀਆ ਖੇਲੁ ਬਡ ਮੇਲੁ ਤਮਾਸਾ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਭ ਰਚਨਾ” (ਸਵਯੋ ਮ:੪ ਕੇ) ੨. ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੂਲ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ । for understanding Waheguru read Bhai Gurdas 13/2. 11/3, 12/17, 4/17 40/22 etc.

<sup>57</sup> (1) ਵਾਵਾ ਹਾਹਾ ਗੱਗਾ ਰਾਰਾ, ਅੱਖਰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਚਾਰ ਪਿਆਰਾ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਖਿਆ, ਨਾਨਕ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਰਾਖਿਆ (ਪ੍ਰਾਣ ਸੰਗਲੀ) ਨਾਨਕ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਿਰਜਿਉ ਨਿਤ ਚੇਤ ( ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼)

(2) ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਤ ਬਚਨ ਉਚਾਰੈ॥ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਧਾਰੈ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ)॥ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਲਾਹਣਾ ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਲਾਏ (ਭ:ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੯ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੩.੬) The word is very close to the *Quranic* word *Hayrah* a derivation from *Takhayar* (wonderment or marvelling). The Prophet is reported to have said, “Lord increase me in marvelling at Thee”. The Sikhs do not ask the Lord for any increase in wonder but repeat the *Word* on all occasions. It has been given to them already. The Sikh lives in wondement.

<sup>58</sup> ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਕਹਿਐ ਰਾਮੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਰਾਮੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਤਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੧)

*Waheguru* (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ) is not a *mantra*<sup>59</sup> in the sense that it can subvert laws of nature if repeated *ad infinitum* on the other hand it is a catalyst that helps one understand and appreciate God's wonders. It is a feeling or realization of the vastness and wonders of the Almighty. All the known knowledge of the humans is inadequate to describe the unknowable God. Therefore the Gurus said that whatever words come closest to the Truth (ਸਤਿਨਾਮ) and wonder (ਵਾਹੁ) are sacred.<sup>60</sup> As a start they can help us in delving into the mysteries of God and appreciation of nature. The Sikhs, therefore, prefer 'Waheguru' because unlike other names of God (like, Ram, Rahim etc) it does not refer to only one attribute of God but elevates the devotee into mystical wonderment (ਵਿਸਮਾਦ) of innumerable attributes of God. It is as if getting drowned into the ocean of God's mysterious ocean of spirituality.<sup>61</sup> The *Sufis* too speak of "seeking to be drowned" (*istighraq*). When the self loses itself into the wonders of the creator, the temporal in the eternal, the finite in the infinite (*fana-fi-Allah* in Sufi terminology), the human journey is complete.

Thus we see that *Waheguru* incorporates all God's greatness and qualities realising which a man feels wonder-struck. It connects man directly with God. Its meaning can be realised only through extreme intuitiveness which in turn attracts God's grace.

In our daily life we use the word ਵਾਹੁ only when we like a thing very much. When Kabir was highly impressed by somebody reciting God's praises, he himself felt spellbound and started saying, "Wonder of wonders how he sings. His singing of God's eulogies captivates my mind."<sup>62</sup>

According to Guru Nanak no one can challenge God in beauty and wonder and no one is like him. "Wondrous is He who gave us life".

<sup>59</sup> The word ਮੰਤਰ actually means ਸਲਾਹ ਯਾਂ ਮਸ਼ਵਰਾ .The word ਮੰਤ੍ਰੀ (minister) is derived from it. Some people interpret it as "ਮਨ+ਤਰ" = ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ. Most people use it to mean charms and incantations that can subvert the laws of nature. The Sikh Gurus condemned such practices claiming magical potency. ਤੰਤੁ ਮੰਤੁ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੬) ਤੰਤੁ ਮੰਤੁ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਵੰਸੁ ਵਜਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੫)

<sup>60</sup> ਵਾਹਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਚਰਜ ਕੋ ਹੋਈ॥ ਅਚਰਜ ਤੇ ਪਰਿ ਉਕਤਿ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਗੁ ਤਮ ਤਨ ਅਗਯਾਨ ਅਨਿਤ ॥ ਰੂ ਪਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕਿਯੋ ਜਿਨ ਚਿਤ ॥ (ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਉਤ੍ਤਰਾਧ ਅਧਿ ੧) ਅਚਰਜ ਰੂਪੁ ਜੁ ਐਸੇ ਅਹੈ ਤਿਸ ਕੋ ਨਾਮ ਵਾਹਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਹੈ (ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸੂਰਜ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਰਾਸ ੧ ਅਮਸੂ ੨੦)

<sup>61</sup> ਜੇ ਕੋ ਡੁਬੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸਾਰ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚਾ ਸਰਬ ਦਾਤਾਰ ।(ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੨)

<sup>62</sup> "ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਕਿਆ ਗਾਵਤਾ ਹੈ, ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵਤਾ ਹੈ (ਆਸਾ ਕਬੀਰ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੮)

“Wondrous is He who supports me”.

Guru Amar Das repeated the same wonder in his own words. He was of the opinion that if we consciously and devotedly internalise the word ‘Wahu’ (ਵਾਹੁ) for the great enlightener God we eventually become one with him. Guru Ram Das again clarified the concept by saying that only the spotless, taintless, unfathomable, limitless God is ਵਾਹੁ (Full of wonders).<sup>63</sup>

For a devoted Sikh, God is the primal Guru. Therefore the word *Wahu* (ਵਾਹੁ, ਵਾਹਿ) came to be combined with Guru (ਗੁਰੂ) to make it *Waheguru*. Considering the importance of the word and experiencing its spiritual merits Bhai Gurdas wrote, “*Waheguru* is the basic concept (ਗੁਰਮੰਤਰ) that frees us from ego”.<sup>64</sup>

It is often argued that simple reading or repetition of a word has no value because the mind is excluded from participation unless we understand the meaning.<sup>65</sup> Mere mechanical repetition of *Waheguru* carries no value. However, when the word is said after internalising the wonder and awe of God, then it has a value and a merit beyond description. Those who repeat it consciously are penetrated by the consciousness that they are partaking of the divine Word. Their persistent reading or repetition becomes a long drawn out invocation of the divine *Naam*.<sup>66</sup> It was to invoke this mystical divine invocation that Guru Gobind Singh included the word ‘*Waheguru*’ in the daily greetings of the Sikhs.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> (1) “ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਇਹ ਜੀਉ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੬) ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਸਾਚੇ ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੋਕ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੩)

(2) “ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਤਿਸਨੇ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿ ਸਚਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰ, ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਤਿਸਨੇ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿ ਗੁਣ ਦਾਤਾ ਮਤਿ ਧੀਰੁ (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੪)

(3) ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰ” (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੧)

<sup>64</sup> ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰਮੰਤਰ ਹੈ ਜਪਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਖੋਈ” (ਵਾਰ ੧੩/੨) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਇਆਲ ਹੋਇ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਚੁ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ (ਵਾਰ ੧੧/੩) ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਚ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਮਾਣੈ (ਵਾਰ ੪੦ ਪਉੜੀ ੨੨) ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚ ਖੰਡ ਵਸਾਇਆ । ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ (ਵਾਰ ੨੪/੧)

<sup>65</sup> ਮੁਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਕਰੈ ਵਿਰਲੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਵਸਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬੫) ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੋ ਜੀਅਹੁ ਜਾਣੈ, ਤਿਸੁ ਅੰਤਰ ਰਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੭)

<sup>66</sup> “ਮੈਂ ਭੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਕੇ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੰਤਰ ਕਾ ਜਾਪ ਕਰਤਾ ਹੂੰ। ਯੋਗ ਸਾਧਨ ਯੋਗਾਚਾਰਯੋਂ ਕੇ ਪਾਸ ਬੈਠ ਕਰ ਕੀਏ, ਔਰ ਸਾਲਹਾ ਸਾਲ ਕੀਏ। ਜੋ ਅਨੰਦ ਔਰ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਮੁਝੇ ਅਬ ਪਰਾਪਤ ਹੈ ਵਹਿ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਕਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲੀ । ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੈ । ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਕਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਤੀ । ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਔਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਸਿਖਿਆ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਸੇ ਬੜ੍ਹ ਕਰ ਕਲਯਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕੋਈ ਔਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਹੀਂ । (ਸਵਾਮੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਨੰਦ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਬਚਨ ਜੋ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਸਤਿਆਨੰਦ ਨੇ ਪੁਸਤਕ “ਗੁਰੂ ਗਿਆਨ” ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ ੫ ਤੇ ਅੰਕਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਸ਼ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ) ਸਵਾਮੀ ਜੀ ਆਪ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧ ਤੇ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ “ ਨਾਮਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਿਧ ਨਾਮ ‘ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ’ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਤਾਰਕ ਮੰਤਰ ਹੈ, ਸਿਧ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਹੈ।

<sup>67</sup> For the first time In his *Hukam Nama* dated Chet 6 Samat 1762 (1705 CE) the Guru wrote “ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ”

Some people believe that every mystical word contains aphoristic formulations, which can help the soul into transcending the mind and entering into the intellectual intuition. They consider repetition a good start or a preliminary exercise. Once this stage is passed the devotee lives in wonder and begins to understand what is being repeated and why and at that stage there remains no need to repeat the ‘Word’ orally.<sup>68</sup>

### 3.3 Surt –Shabad:

“Word consciousness” (Surt-Shabad) is the integrated awareness imbibed by the soul through the word and represents subliminal, intellectual and super-sensuous intuitive perception. This is achieved when the mind is attuned to the meanings of what we utter. A meaningless sound like the chirping of birds can please us but leads us nowhere and provides no information or direction. Without direction and knowledge we cannot travel on the path of spirituality. The next and the most important stage therefore is to repeat (or hear) the word and to imbibe its meanings, which leads to spiritual bliss.<sup>69</sup> This is described by saying that one should make the Shabad his Guru and his concentration the follower of the Guru.<sup>70</sup> In other words concentration must follow the Word. Bhai Gurdas puts it in simple straightforward words and says, “A Gurmukh’s life is meaningful only if he reads/hears Gurbani and internalises its essence.”<sup>71</sup>

Even though God and mystic are two separate identities like ice is to water, their essence is one. As the electromagnetic current from a broadcasting station is the same in all radio receivers, God’s grace is showered equally on all who tune to Him and attain this spiritual stage. At this stage the difference between God and God’s men (the Gurus) gets obliterated or at least narrowed.<sup>72</sup>

---

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ and later Mata Sahib Devi continued this tradition (see her *Hukam Nama of Chet Sudi 9 1785 Bikrami*)

<sup>68</sup> ਬਿਨੁ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਜੇ ਜਪੈ ਹਿਆਇ, ਕੋਈ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੈਸਾ ਨਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੫੬) ਉਚਾ ਨਹੀ ਕਹਣਾ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਜਾਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮੦)

<sup>69</sup> ਬਕਤੈ ਬਕਿ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਨਾਇਆ ਸੁਨਤੈ ਸੁਨਿ ਮੰਨਿ ਬਸਾਇਆ, ਕਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਉਤਰਸਿ ਪਾਰੰ ਕਹੈ ਕਬੀਰਾ ਸਾਰੰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੭੨) ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੨) ਪੜਿਐ ਨਾਹੀ ਭੇਦੁ ਬੁਝਿਐ ਪਾਵਣਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੮) ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨੀ ਸੁਣਿ ਕੈ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਹਉ ਤਿਨਾ ਵਿਟਹੁ ਕੁਰਬਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੦)

<sup>70</sup> ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩) ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਜਾਣੀਐ, ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)

<sup>71</sup> ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਜਨਮ ਸਕਾਰਥਾ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਪੜਿ ਸਮਝ ਸੁਣੇਹੀ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੧/੩)

<sup>72</sup> ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਸੁਹਬਤਿ ਮਰਦਾਨਿ ਹੱਕ ਤਲਬ ਗੋਯਾ। ਕਿ ਤਾਲਬਾਨਿ ਖੁਦਾ ਵਾਸਲਾਨਿ ਅੱਲਹ ਅੰਦ = ਹੇ ਗੋਯਾ ਤੂੰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਰੱਬੀ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ ਦੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਕਰ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਰੱਬ ਦੇ ਤਾਪੀ ਰੱਬ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਕ ਮਿੱਕ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)



## Chapter Four

### Khand

**R**eligion at its highest level is mysticism. When a mystic succeeds in establishing an unwavering and unflinching relationship with God then he is blessed with grace in abundance and is said to have met God. This state is known in Sikhism as *Sach Khand nivas* or *Sehaj Awastha*.

For achieving this blissful state man has to strive hard. The process starts by restraining the mind from worldly cravings and attachments and attuning the consciousness (*Surt*) through the Guru's Shabad with primal Word (ਨਾਦ). Guru Nanak has outlined five stages called *Khands* (regions).<sup>73</sup> The destination is *Sach Khand* (The region of the True lord). This is where the spark of human light merges with the divine light and the individuality vanishes into eternity.

#### 4.1 The journey:

God planted Himself mystically in everything. God's presence in the human body is epitomised as 'Soul' (ਆਤਮਾ). As a rule the soul should be supreme in the human body and should control all actions but humans have also developed mind, which is composed of five worldly elements.<sup>74</sup> Being a part of the earthly elements the human mind is more attracted towards earthly pleasures than towards the divine soul. It has become a slave to material comforts and is a great impediment in the way of our communication with the universal soul. *Gurbani* compares the mind with a monkey who puts his hand in a narrow pot to extract grain.

<sup>73</sup> ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ ਖੰਡ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ, ਦਰਜਾ ਜਾਂ ਮੰਜਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੭)

<sup>74</sup> ਇਹ ਮਨੁ ਸਕਤੀ ਇਹ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਉ, ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕੋ ਜੀਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੪੨)

His hand gets trapped in the pot but being greedy he does not open his fist and is eventually caught and made to dance from door to door.<sup>75</sup> Thus our mind, which should be a useful weapon for the soul, becomes its enemy dragging it into worldly attachments. Like the parasite vine, (*cuscuta ਅਮਰ ਵੇਲ*) it starts destroying the human soul. The religious preceptors instruct us how to reverse the process and travel on the right path to God.<sup>76</sup>

*“Guru Nanak realised that a religion, if it is to be a living force, must be a practical religion, one that teaches mankind not how to escape from the world but how to live worthily in it, not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met or overcome.” C.H.Payne*

## 4.2 The Yogi's Way:

The Yogi's method of freeing the soul involves physical exercises. In Gurbani the Yogi's methodology is termed *Neuly Karam*.<sup>77</sup> The Sikh Gurus did not approve the Yogi's method

The Yogis, call their process *Oondh Kanwal Vigas*, (*ਉਂਧ ਕੰਵਲ ਵਿਗਾਸ*) which means turning upturned *Kanwal* flower (Lotus) back into position. They believe that through Hathyoga or Tantric Yoga (certain complex physical exercises) the energies of the body can be concentrated on certain points<sup>78</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> ਮਰਕਟ ਮੁਸਟੀ ਅਨਾਜ ਕੀ ਮਨ ਬਉਰਾ ਰੇ ਲੀਨੀ ਹਾਥੁ ਪਸਾਰਿ॥ ਛੁਟਨ ਕੋ ਸਹਸਾ ਪਰਿਓ ਮਨ ਬਉਰਾ ਰੇ ਨਾਚਿਓ ਘਰ ਘਰ ਬਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੬)

<sup>76</sup> ਉਲਟੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਜਮੁਨ ਮਿਲਾਵਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੨੭)ਉਲਟ ਭਈ ਘਰ ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਣਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੨) ਉਲਟ ਭਈ ਜੀਵਤ ਮਹਿ ਜਾਗਿਆ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੧)

<sup>77</sup> ਨਿਉਲੀ ਕਰਮ ਖਟੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਰੀਜੈ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਸਾਸੁ ਲੀਜੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦੫) ਸਿਧਾ ਕੇ ਆਸਣ ਜੇ ਸਿਖੈ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਵਸਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਮਾਇ॥ ਮਨੁ ਕੀ ਮੈਲੁ ਨਾ ਉਤਰੇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੮). Yoga also has a darker side. Blood sacrifices, consorting in crematoriums, propitiating darker forces, drinking wine etc are also adopted by some Yogis known as Aghori. The Gurus call them *Sakat*, which stands for misguided reprobates and evildoers. Yogis usually shunned all moral responsibility and divorced family life.

<sup>78</sup> There are six sets of exercises known as ਬੰਧ, ਆਸਣ, ਚਕਰ or ਮੁਦਰਾ (Muladhar, Svadhistan, Manipura, Anahat, Visudhajua, and Ajna). By doing these exercises, the Yogis believe to correct the position of the lotus shaped *Nabh Kanwal*, which contains the *Amrit*. Once this is done the *Prana*, (life force) is liberated from *Ida* and *Pingla* nerves and is made to enter through the aroused *Kundalni* (coiled she-snake) into *Sahasra*. Doctors and physiologists have so far failed to find any *Kundalni* in the human body. The Sikh Gurus do not mention *Kundalni* in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The only mention of *Kundalni* we find is by Bard (Bhatt) Gyand where he says, “ਕੁੰਡਲਨੀ ਸੁਰਬੀ ਸਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਮੁਖ ਮੱਚਾ, (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੨) (*Kundalni* is disentangled through the *Sangat* and the *Guru* multiplies the *Parmanand* (eternal bliss) manifold. According to Sikhism coils of the so-called *Kundalni* are nothing but the conglomeration of evil desires, which must be sublimated for the proper development of the human being. See *Guru Granth Sahib* pages 12, 22, 23, 91, 108, 224, 612,

It is believed that by adopting these cumbersome techniques the *Upturned Kanwal flower* is brought into its correct position and a state of bliss is achieved. In their language it is called awakening the Kundlani or *Kaivalya* (Aloneness). The process is very arduous and even dangerous. The Sikh Gurus say that for the Sikhs the Sangat and the practice of the Guru's word does all that is required to achieve the end. For the Sikhs the *upturned Kanwal* is corrected through Gurbani.<sup>79</sup>

### 4.3 The predicament

Man has a dual nature. His connection with the world outside attracts most of his attention to the detriment of his inner self, which can connect him to God. This turns him into a degenerate (*Manmukh*) behaving as a slave of ego (*Haumai*).<sup>80</sup> The antidote lies in controlling the mind and becoming regenerate (*Gurmukh*). Gurbani explains that man's religion stands in between these two extremes to guide him. "Pulled by the two forces of worldliness and spirituality he wastes his life in indecision."<sup>81</sup> Some times he is attracted by his soul and tries to detach himself from the worldly shackles but most of the time he is misguided by his mind into worldly entanglements. The Guru describes this predicament by saying, "Both his arms are pulled in two different directions and therefore he loses them both."<sup>82</sup> Baba Farid also states this tragedy of man very clearly when he writes, "The valuable life is wasted in indecision and the physical body ends up in a heap of dust."<sup>83</sup>

The indecision is due to the attractions of the world and its pleasures usually expressed by using the term *Maya* (mammon). Our mind is a creation of the matter therefore it seldom ever breaks its bond with *Maya*.

---

945, and 1194 for further information. Spiritual knowledge disentangles the Kundalini. "ਉਲਟਿਓ ਕਮਲੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੩)

<sup>79</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸਬਦ ਕੰਵਲ ਪਰਗਾਸਾ.....(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੪) In some parts of India the Hindus celebrate a festival of Nag Panchmi ceremoniously to placate the She-Snake. This is symbolic of raising the *Kundalini* (the she-snake) in the body.

<sup>80</sup> ਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਜਿਨ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਿ ਲਇਆ ਮਾਇਆ ਬੋਲਨਿ ਪਏ ਰਵਾਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੦)

<sup>81</sup> ਪਰਵਿਰਤਿ ਨਿਰਵਿਰਤਿ ਹਾਠਾ ਦੇਵੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਰੈਬਾਰਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੦)

<sup>82</sup> ਟੂਟੈ ਨੇਹੁ ਕਿ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਸਹੀ ॥ ਟੂਟੈ ਬਾਹ ਦੁਹੂ ਦਿਸ ਗਹੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੩)

<sup>83</sup> ਹੰਸੁ ਚਲਸੀ ਡੁੰਮਣਾ ਅਹਿ ਤਨੁ ਢੇਰੀ ਥੀਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੪)

Alongwith many other maladies of *Maya* it develops five deadly sins of anger, greed, lust, worldly shackles and arrogance etc. Just as nothing can be contained in a tumbler if it is upside down, God's love cannot be enshrined in our heart unless we prepare it to receive *Naam*.<sup>84</sup> Figuratively, a vessel can contain something only if it is emptied of the previous contents. We have to wipe our minds clean of the cesspit of deadly sins and worldly attachments and only then can we hope to attune with God.<sup>85</sup> *Maya*, which creates ego, is the antithesis of truth.<sup>86</sup> The more one detaches from worldly pleasures and attractions, the more chances he has of realising the reality of human existence and its goal.

This is sometimes expressed by saying that man has to develop special eyes to see God.<sup>87</sup> These are mind's eyes, which can grasp the reality of human existence and help the devotee live within the celestial law. To develop the mind's eyes the guidance of a preceptor is of utmost importance. The divine preceptor (*Guru*) directs the novitiate on to self-realisation.<sup>88</sup> Since he has himself traversed the path of God realization he makes the process easy for the devotee through his expert guidance. This process is not as easy as it sounds because worldly attachments do not disappear so easily.<sup>89</sup> Perseverance and full faith in the Guru are absolutely necessary. "The inner light and music are enjoyed when the true Guru helps solve the problem".<sup>90</sup> The human mind begins to understand the divine laws (*Hukam*) and slowly and steadily acquires the merit of knowing the lawgiver (God). The Guru clearly delineates the process for us as follows.

<sup>84</sup> ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ ਜੋ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਧੋ ਭਾਛੈ ਟਿਕੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੮)

<sup>85</sup> ਵਸਤੁ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਸਮਾਵੈ ਦੂਜੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਪਾਸਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੪)

<sup>86</sup> ਹਉਮੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਵਿਰੋਧੁ ਹੈ ਦੁਇ ਨ ਵਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਠਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬੦)

<sup>87</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖੜੀਆਂ ਬਿਅੰਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸਦੇ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੭੭) ॥ ਲੋਇਣ ਦੇਖਿ ਰਹੇ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਅਦਿਸਟਿ ਲਗਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੦) ਚਸਮਿ ਦੀਗਰ ਬਾਯਦ ਤਾ ਹੁਸਨਿ ਊ ਦੀਦਨ ਤਵਾਂ (For seeing his glory you need different eyes)

<sup>88</sup> ਦਰ ਦਹਰ ਕਿ ਮਰਦਾਨਿ ਖੁਦਾ ਆਮਦਾ ਅੰਦ ॥ ਬਰ ਗੁਮਸੁਦਗਾਨਿ ਰਹਿਨੁਮਾ ਆਮਦਾ ਅੰਦ ॥ ਗੋਯਾ ਗਰ ਈ ਚਸਮਿ ਤੋ ਕੈ ਮੁਸਤਾਕਿ ਖੁਦਾ ਅਸਤ। ਮਰਦਾਨਿ ਖੁਦਾ ਖੁਦਾਨੁਮਾ ਆਮਦਾ ਅੰਦ ॥ = ਰੱਬੀ ਮਹਾਂਪੁਰਸ਼ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੁੱਲਿਆਂ ਭਟਕਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਹ ਦਿਖਾਉਣ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਅੱਖ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਤਾਂਘਵੰਤ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮੰਨ ਲੈ ਕਿ ਰੱਬੀ ਬੰਦੇ ਰੱਬ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>89</sup> ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਾਹੀ ਫਾਸੈ ਕਉਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੫)

<sup>90</sup> ਅੰਤਰਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਪੁਨਿ ਜਾਗੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਝਗਰੁ ਨਿਬੇਰੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੮੯). ਚਿਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਸਚਿ ਵਸੈ ਭਾਈ ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਮੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭)

“When the ears attune only to the glories of God, the eyes see only the benevolent saints in everybody, the tongue sings the virtues of the ineffable, the mind contemplates on the perfect Lord and hands and feet perform the service of the God-orientated people only then O Nanak can one expect God’s Grace.”<sup>91</sup> This stage is easily reached through following the instructions of the Guru without question.<sup>92</sup>

When a Vedanti attains this spiritual height he begins saying *Brahmasmi* (*I am God*), when a Sufi reaches this stage he says *Analhaq* (*I am God*). When a Sikh attains this spiritual position he cries out, *I am yours, I am yours* because this is what he is taught to say right from the beginning.<sup>93</sup>

#### 4.4 The Guru’s way:

For a Sikh the inward devotion to the Guru and His word is the start and also the end. Without understanding the ‘Word’ the world is simply blind and the outward observances or external ritual practices are useless.<sup>94</sup> The Guru delineated five stages before the devotee can enjoy eternal bliss. These five stages are called Khands.<sup>95</sup>

The Guru directs the novitiate to set his target at discovering himself and to make it his main aim in life. This done the novitiate practises spiritual living as directed and engages in philanthropic activities, which help him

<sup>91</sup> ਕਰਨੀ ਸੁਨੀਐ ਜਸੁ ਗੋਪਾਲ ॥ ਨੈਨੀ ਪੇਖਤ ਸਾਧ ਦਇਆਲ ॥ ਰਸਨਾ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਵੈ ਬੇਅੰਤ, ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਿਤਵੈ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਵੰਤ ॥ ਹਸਤ ਚਰਨ ਸੰਤ ਟਹਲ ਕਮਾਈਐ, ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਸੰਜਮ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੮)

<sup>92</sup> “ਨਾਨਕ ਦਇਆਲ ਹੋਆ ਤਿਨ ਊਪਰਿ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਭਾਣਾ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਭਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੧੫) ਚਿਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਸਚਿ ਵਸੈ ਭਾਈ ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਮੇਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭)

<sup>93</sup> ਕਬੀਰ ਤੂੰ ਤੂੰ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂ ਹੂਆ ਮੁਖ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਾ ਨ ਹੂੰ ॥ ਜਬ ਆਪਾ ਪਰ ਕਾ ਮਿਟਿ ਗਇਆ ਜਤ ਦੇਖਉ ਤਤ ਤੂ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭੫)

<sup>94</sup> ਊਧਉ ਕਵਲੁ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਮਤਿ ਹੋਛੀ ਮਨਿ ਅੰਧੈ ਸਿਰਿ ਧੰਧਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੬)

<sup>95</sup> The travelling of the pure consciousness (ਚੇਤਨਾ) through five levels is also mentioned in the Upanishadas where the five stages are named **Annamayakosa, Pranamyakosa, Manomayakosa, Jijnamayakosa, and Anandamayakosa**. There the description and functions are very turgid and subtle and do not match with the five Khands described by Guru Nanak. In her book titled “Mysticism” Miss Underhill also mentions the five stages of human enlightenment as follows: (1) Awakening of the self (ਜਾਗ੍ਰਿਤੀ) (2) Purification of the self (ਸ਼ੁੱਧੀ) (3) Illumination of the self (ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ) (4) Dark night of the soul (ਆਤਮਿਕ ਦੇਸ਼) (5) Unitive life (ਸੰਯੋਗ). Muslims call these five stages ਸਰੀਅਤ, ਤ੍ਰੀਕਤ, ਹਕੀਕਤ, ਮਾਰਫਤ, ਫਿਨਾ-ਫੀ-ਅਲਾ. “ਸਰੀਅਤ ਸਾਡੀ ਦਾਈ ਹੈ, ਤ੍ਰੀਕਤ ਸਾਡੀ ਮਾਈ ਹੈ, ਅਗੋਂ ਹੱਕ ਹਕੀਕਤ ਆਈ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਾਰਫਤੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜਾ ਅਲਾ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਇਆ ਹੈ। (ਬੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ) .ਪੰਜੇ ਮਹਿਲ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਨਣ, ਦੀਵਾ ਕਿਤ ਵਲ ਧਰੀਏ ਹੂ। ਪੰਜ ਇਮਾਮ ਤੇ ਪੰਜੇ ਕਿਬਲੇ ਸਜਦਾ ਕਿਤ ਵਲ ਕਰੀਏ ਹੂ। (ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਬਾਹੂ). Although the number of spiritual stages is the same in many religions, the stipulations are different. For example the Muslim *Shariat* (requiring Kalima, Namaz, Roza, Zakat and Hajj etc) has nothing to do with Sikhism. The Sufi *Muqams* (*Nasut, Jabrat, Malkut, and Lahut*) and *Tariqat* do not correspond with anything in Sikhism. *Nasut* pertains to sensuality, which is discredited in Sikhism.

control selfishness greed, pride and undue attachment.

### (1) Dharam Khand (Plane of righteousness)

In the Dharam Khand, which is the first step, the devotee learns the laws of social living and understands his duties and responsibilities. He attends to the inculcation of virtues and practises truthful living. He discharges all his worldly responsibilities to his family and society and yet works for his own spiritual emancipation and self-culture.<sup>96</sup> The goal he sets for himself is not individual uplift but collective redemption of the society (ਪਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਕਰਮ).<sup>97</sup> Slowly and steadily he realises his past mistakes and instructs his mind to remain alert and not to be a victim of the five thieves (sex, anger, greed, attachment and ego)<sup>98</sup>

Inward devotion to the Guru and His word is very helpful and is the start. It does not involve any outward observances or external ritual practices but inward discipline of humility, firm faith, perseverance, love, mercy, and devotion. Righteous and compassionate deeds, strife for justice and virtue, respect for life etc boost a novice's resolve and strengthen his trust in the Guru's word. The love for the Guru's word becomes his prop and he remembers it at all times (*naam Simran*). All his actions are performed under self-imposed fear of God (ਭਉ).<sup>99</sup> The rules of this stage have been simplified by saying “*Naam Japo, wand shako, Dharam di kirt Karo*” (pray, share your earnings with others and labour honestly)

By living like this the devotee realises that “Nights, days, weeks and seasons; wind, water, fire and the nether regions—in the midst of these, God established the earth as a transitory home for Dharma (Virtuous living). He placed the various species of beings in the universe. Their names are uncounted and endless.

By their deeds and their actions, they shall be judged.”<sup>100</sup> The devotee begins to realise that his own self is a storehouse of spiritual secrets.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>96</sup> ਜਾਹਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਮਾਇਲਿ ਫਰਜ਼ਦੋ ਜਨ । ਦਰ ਹਕੀਕਤ ਬਾ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਖੋਸ਼ ਤਨ= ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਾਲ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਮੋਹ-ਮਗਨ ਦਿਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰੰਤੂ ਅਸਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਰੱਬ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>97</sup> ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿਲਤੀ ਲਾਵ ਪਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਕਰਮ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੩)

<sup>98</sup> ਅਬ ਮਨ ਜਾਗਤ ਰਹੁ ਰੇ ਭਾਈ, ਗਾਫਲੁ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਜਨਮ ਗਵਾਇਓ ਚੋਰੁ ਮੁਸੈ ਘਰੁ ਜਾਈ॥ ਪੰਚ ਪਹਰੂਆ ਦਰ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਨਹੀ ਪਤੀਆਰਾ ਅਨਦ ਚੇਤਿ ਸੁਚੇਤ ਚਿਤ ਹੋਇ ਰਹੁ ਤਉ ਨੈ ਪਰਗਾਸ ਉਜਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੯) ਜਾਗਤ ਰਹੇ ਨ ਅਲੀਆ ਭਾਖੈ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਬਸਿ ਕਰਿ ਰਾਖੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੭੪)

<sup>99</sup> ਜਿਨਾ ਭਉ ਤਿਨ ਨਾਹਿ ਭਉ ਮੁਚੁ ਭਉ ਨਿਭਵਿਆਹ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੮)

<sup>100</sup> “ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਬਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ॥ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ॥ ਤਿਸ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਬਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉਤੀ ੩੪)।

## (2) Gian Khand:- Wismad (plane of divine knowledge)

The devotee now realizes that “there is but one and only one thing that counts”<sup>102</sup> and it is the acquisition of knowledge leading to unfaltering belief in God. He, therefore, frees himself from unnecessary entanglements of the temporal world and diligently devotes his energy in concentration and on acquiring spiritual knowledge.<sup>103</sup>

The more intuitional knowledge he acquires the more his thirst for knowledge grows and eventually he becomes fully knowledgeable.<sup>104</sup> Now he finds that “spiritual wisdom reigns supreme. The Sound-current (*Naad*) vibrates amidst the sounds and the sights of bliss”.<sup>105</sup> He becomes aware of his own insignificant existence in the universe where there are millions of stellar spheres, mystic marvels, forms of life and speech.

At this stage his intuitive consciousness, intellect and understanding are re-shaped and re-aligned.

## (3) Saram Khand: (Plane of effort)

Mere knowledge is useless unless it is put into practice. The devotee now acts through volitional consciousness and develops contemplation and self-discipline. He learns to control ego and lives a mentally detached life while still living in the world.<sup>106</sup> At this stage the devotee starts appreciation of mysticism and detaches himself from too much involvement in gratification of his worldly desires.

He appreciates the nature's beauty and marvels at its mysteries. Thus practising he fashions his cognition, discernment, mind and intellect and becomes equal with men of occult powers.<sup>107</sup>

---

ਕਰਮੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਹੋਇ ਵੀਚਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭)

<sup>101</sup> ਇਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਸਭੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਚੇ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੋਤਿ॥ ਗੁਹਜ ਰਤਨ ਵਿਚਿ ਲੁਕਿ ਰਹੇ, ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੇਵਕ ਕਵੈ ਖੋਤਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੯)

<sup>102</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਲੇਖੈ ਇਕ ਗਲ ਹੋਰੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਝਖਣਾ ਝਾਖ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੭)

<sup>103</sup> ਦੇਖੋ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਨ ਕੀ ਆਈ ਆਂਧੀ ॥ ਸਭੈ ਉਡਾਨੀ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਟਾਟੀ ਰਹੈ ਨਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਬਾਂਧੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੧)

<sup>104</sup> ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਨੇਤ੍ਰੀ ਪੜਿਆ॥ ਤਾ ਕਉ ਸਰਬ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧੦) ਪਾਇਆ ਰਤਨੁ ਘਰਾਹੁ ਦੀਵਾ ਬਾਲਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੯)

<sup>105</sup> ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦ. (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੩੬)

<sup>106</sup> ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਮੁਰਗਾਈ ਨੈ ਸਾਣੇ ॥ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੮)

<sup>107</sup> ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਬੁਧਿ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਾ ਸਿਧਾ ਕੀ ਸੁਧਿ (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੩੬)

#### (4) Karam Khand:-(plane of grace)

The devotee is flooded with divine light and his soul starts comprehending the divine mysteries.<sup>108</sup> Here he comes to know about spiritually advanced God's doughty warriors (warring with five deadly sins) who have enshrined God in their hearts at all times.<sup>109</sup> Only those reach this stage who have given a tough fight to their mind and defeated it.<sup>110</sup> They are indebted to God for their spiritual attainment and do not consider that they themselves deserve any credit for it.<sup>111</sup> Such spiritual giants live constantly in spiritual beatitude and are never subdued by mammon.<sup>112</sup> They are the *Bhagats* whose reputation spreads throughout the universe. God's praises adore their lips and their mind is always in a state of bliss.<sup>113</sup> The fear of physical death and delusions no longer bother them. This mystical consciousness is a perennial source of joy for them. Such men can be called real Pandits.<sup>114</sup>

#### (5) Sach Khand: - (Plane of Truth or spiritual realization).

The final stage of Mystical experiences is the Sach Khand.<sup>115</sup> At this stage the devotee acquires many spiritual qualities. His mind is illuminated with divine knowledge and is detached from worldly attachments. Thus elevated, his mind constantly and effortlessly remains focussed on God and is perfectly disciplined.<sup>116</sup> It is strictly under his command and is serenely pacified.

<sup>108</sup> ਤਹ ਸਦਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਅਨਹਤ ਆਖਾਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਵਸਹਿ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਆਧਾਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੩੭)

<sup>109</sup> ਤਿਥੇ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ ਤਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰ (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੩੭)

<sup>110</sup> ਜੋ ਜਨ ਲੂਝਹਿ ਮਨੈ ਸਿਉ ਸੇ ਸੂਰੇ ਪਰਧਾਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੮੯) ਮਨੁ ਬਸਿ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜੇ ਪੂਰਨ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੮)

<sup>111</sup> ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬਹੁ ਮਾਣ ਕਰਤੇ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬਹੁ ਮਾਣੁ, ਜੋਰਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ਸੁਖਿ ਵਸਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੭)

<sup>112</sup> ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਠਾਗੇ ਜਾਹਿ (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੩੭)

<sup>113</sup> ਭਗਤਾ ਮੁਖਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਆਖਿ ਵਖਾਣੀ, ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਨੁ ਬਿਗਸੈ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਨੀ ਮਨੁ ਲਾਈ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੬੯)

<sup>114</sup> “ਆਤਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਤੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਈ ਬੁਧੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਹੀ ਪੰਡਾ ਹੈ”। (ਗੀਤਾ ੨.੧੧) ਇਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਪੰਡਤ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਪੰਡਤੁ ਜੋ ਮਨੁ ਪਰਬੋਧੈ ਰਾਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਆਤਮ ਮਹਿ ਸੋਧੈ। (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੪)

<sup>115</sup> Some scholars think that *Sach Khand* actually exists somewhere in the Universe like other planets. If this were so then it will have to be admitted that God lives only in one place and cannot be said to be a part of the whole universe. *Sach Khand* of Guru Nanak's concept is a mental spiritual state of high ecstasy and inner vision. For us humans God exists where His praises are sung. ਤਹਾ ਬੈਕੁੰਨੁ ਜਹ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ Gurbani also says, “ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚ ਖੰਡ ਵਸਾਯਾ” . (*Sach Khand* exists in the company of God- orientated people). ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚਖੰਡ ਹੈ ਆਏ ਝਰੋਖੇ ਖੋਲੈ ਬਾਰੀ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ). The realisation of *Sach Khand* is possible only in enlightened imagination of reality which is developed in the company of the God's devotees.

<sup>116</sup> ਸੁੰਦਰ ਪੁਰਖ ਬਿਰਾਜਿਤ ਪੇਖਿ ਮਨੁ ਬੋਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੨)



This is the highest stage of spiritual development and a state of bliss, beatitude, eternal peace and equipoise (ਸਹਿਜ ਅਵਸਥਾ). It transcends time and space. The mystic's ecstasy (ਸਮਾਧੀ) leads to meditative spiritual absorption in God. He becomes a *Braham Giani* (spiritual elite) in spirit and action, enjoys bliss but cannot describe it.<sup>117</sup> He automatically gains knowledge of the innumerable worlds in the universe. He acts in God's Will (ਰਜਾ) and is ever prepared to die for a noble cause in the way of God. Like a current flowing through the wire, God's creative energy starts flowing through the devotee and his word acquires a magical power. He himself is liberated and undertakes to liberate others from Mammon.<sup>118</sup> All his efforts are now directed towards creating the "kingdom of God" on earth and to transform *Manmukhs* (Self-centred persons) into *Gurmukhs* (God-conscious persons). Well-being of all (ਸਰਬਤ ਕਾ ਭਲਾ) becomes his manifesto.

Religious principles only offer knowledge and are a food for thought. Intuitive knowledge comes only through persistent practice<sup>119</sup>. We the Sikhs call our religion "Panth" which means "way" or "Route". Anybody walking on a path must of necessity know his destination and the impediments of the way. He must also have the fortitude to keep walking<sup>120</sup> and not to stop before reaching the destination.<sup>121</sup> The higher a devotee rises in these Khands (spiritual planes) the more grace of God he enjoys.

The Sikh Gurus did not simply delineate the five stages as a set of ideas; they actually practised and lived through them. So what they preached was the realized ideal about whose impediments and short cuts they had personal experience.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>117</sup> (1) ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਮਿਲੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਿ ਸੋਭਾ ਪਾਵਣਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪)(੨) ਗੁੰਗੈ ਮਹਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸੁ ਚਾਖਿਆ ਪੂਛੇ ਕਹਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਹੋ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੭)

<sup>118</sup> ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਅਵਰਾ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਕਰਾਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੪) ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਸੰਗੀ ਤਰੇ ਕੁਲ ਕੁਟੰਬ ਉਧਾਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੧੪) ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਕਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੫)

<sup>119</sup> ਜੋ ਪੜਿਆ ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਬੀਨਾ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਕਮਾਣਾ ਨਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੮)

<sup>120</sup> ਰੇ ਮਨ ਡੀਗ ਨ ਡੋਲੀਐ ਸੀਧੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਧਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੧)

<sup>121</sup> ਅਗਾਹਾ ਕੂ ਤੁਾਖਿ ਪਿਛਾ ਫੇਰਿ ਨ ਮੁਹਡਤਾ, ਨਾਨਕ ਸਿਭਿ ਇਵੇਹਾ ਵਾਰ ਬਹੁਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵੀ ਜਨਮਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੯੬)

<sup>122</sup> ਸੋ ਵਸੈ ਇਤੁ ਘਰਿ ਜਿਸੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਸੇਵ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੩੦)

## 4.5 Nirban (Salvation)

The term has been defined differently by different religions. In Hinduism salvation is considered to be a state that one reaches after death. Rituals, like bathing in the Ganges and other sacred rivers, are supposed to help in attaining salvation.<sup>123</sup> For the Sikhs it means the spiritual merger of the human soul (*Jivatma*) with the Supreme soul (*Parm Atma*) as water merges with water or light blends with light.<sup>124</sup>

This state of merger is possible only through heightened spiritual contemplation when one attains the *Sach Khand*. The word of the Guru is the surest path to it. In this state the Sikh truly feels that his Guru is always with him.<sup>125</sup> The mystical consciousness thus obtained is a perennial source of joy. Only very rare and completely purified devotees can reach this infinite perfection after conquering their attachment with worldly attractions. Sikhism advocates that such a status is to be achieved while physically alive. Sikhism does not accept the idea of achieving salvation after death.

## 4.6 Dasam Dwar

*Dasam Dwar* literally means “The tenth door”. It has been mentioned in Gurbani at many places. All living animals have five senses giving rise to nine orifices in the body (two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth and two front and back outlets) through which we perform various acts to keep the body going and to understand the world around us.

---

<sup>123</sup> “Varanasi is a generous city. It offers instant Mukti (salvation), the best of its kind. For in Shiva’s city a dip in the Ganga gives you nirvana Mukti, you are saved forever”. (Statesman dated May 30, 1982).

Mr. Sham Lal Yadav (the then Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha) wrote, “Ganges water has been polluted to such an extent that it is not fit even for irrigation, let alone bathing.” (Tribune dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 1982). Gurmat says, ਮੂਏ ਹੂਏ ਜਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੇਹੁਗੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੋਇਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯੨). “Liberation is not the isolation of the immortal spirit from the mortal human life, but is the transfiguration of the whole man.” (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan ex-president of India)

<sup>124</sup> ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਮਿਲੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਿ ਸੋਭਾ ਪਾਵਣਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪)

<sup>125</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਮੇਰੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਨਾਲੇ ॥ ਸਿਮਰ ਸਿਮਰ ਤਿਸ ਸਦਾ ਸਮਾਲੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੪)

These doors of perception roughly correspond to our five senses of sound, touch, shape, taste (enjoyment), and smell (ਸ਼ਬਦ, ਸਪਰਸ਼, ਰੂਪ, ਰਸ, ਗੰਧ) etc.<sup>126</sup> The human soul (which has become a slave to the mind) is tied up with the world and is too much engrossed in serving and satisfying the five senses.<sup>127</sup> Kabir tells us that our soul wanders around aimlessly in these nine doors and remains oblivious to the tenth.<sup>128</sup> The tenth door (sixth sense, spiritual eye) is invisible and more powerful orifice leading to enlightenment and salvation. According to Gurbani this mystical door is narrow (as small as one tenth of a mustard seed),<sup>129</sup> closed tightly and is secret.<sup>130</sup> Our mind is inflated with ego and is like an elephant that cannot walk through this narrow door. This door opens into the realm of God's grace (spiritual thoughts) but only through following spiritual (or some say Yogic) practices. Anybody who succeeds in opening this tenth door is sure to achieve bliss.<sup>131</sup> Opening of this door is referred to in Gurbani as achieving the spiritual eye or third eye.<sup>132</sup>

The *Dasam Dwar* has been variously called “Divine experience”, “religious experience”, or Mystic experience” in Gurbani. It is very difficult to visit and has been called Stone hard door (ਬਜਰ ਕਪਾਟ), which opens only through following the Guru's instruction.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>126</sup> ਨਗਰੀ ਏਕੈ ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਧਾਵਤ ਬਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੩). They are known, as ਹਵਾਸ-ਏ-ਖਾਮਸਾ. Ideas or thoughts are free from these physical senses. We do not know why and how the ideas originate. It is this realm of ideas or thoughts, which has connection with spiritual elevation.

<sup>127</sup> ਹਮ ਖੁਦਾ ਖਾਹੀ ਓ ਹਮ ਦੁਨੀਆਏ ਦੂਨ। ਇਨ ਖਿਆਲ ਅਸਤੋ ਮੁਹਾਲ ਅਸਤੋ ਜਨੂਨ (ਤੂੰ ਰਬ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਭਾਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਦੁਨੀਆਂਦਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਿਆਗਦਾ। ਇਹ ਖਾਮਖਿਆਲੀ ਹੈ, ਅਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ, ਮੂਰਖਤਾਈ ਹੈ )

<sup>128</sup> ਨਉ ਘਰ ਦੇਖਿ ਜੁ ਕਾਮਨਿ ਭੁਲੀ ਬਸਤ ਅਨੂਪ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਨਵੈ ਘਰ ਮੂਸੇ ਦਸਵੈ ਤਤ ਸਮਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੯) ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਨਵੇ ਘਰ ਫੀਕੇ ਰਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਚੁਈਜੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੨੩)

<sup>129</sup> ਕਬੀਰ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੰਕੁਰਾ ਰਾਈ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਭਾਇ ॥ ਮਨੁ ਤਉ ਮੈਗਲੁ ਹੋਇ ਰਹਿਓ ਨਿਕਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਕੈ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੭).

<sup>130</sup> ਦੇਹੀ ਨਗਰੀ ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਸੋ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਰਹਾਤਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੧) ਨਉ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਪਰਗਟ ਕੀਏ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਗੁਪਤ ਰਖਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੨) ਇਸ ਵਿਹੜੇ ਦੇ ਨੌਂ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਗੁਪਤ ਰਖਾਤੀ ॥ ਓਸ ਗਲੀ ਦੀ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ, ਜਹਾਂ ਆਵੇ ਪੀਆ ਰਾਤੀ (ਬੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ)

<sup>131</sup> ਦਸਵੈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਤੀਤੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਾ ਆਪੇ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੯) ਦਸਵੈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਲੇਖੁ ਅਪਾਰੀ ਆਪੇ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੩)

<sup>132</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖਤੀਆਂ ਬਿਆਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸਦੇ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੭੭) ॥ ਬੁਲ੍ਹਿਆ ਸ਼ਹੁ ਅਸਾਂ ਬੀਂ ਵੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ । ਬਿਨ ਸ਼ਹੁ ਦੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ॥ ਪਰ ਵੇਖਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਅੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ॥ ਤਾਹੀਂ ਜਾਨ ਪਈ ਦੁਖੜੇ ਸਹਿੰਦੀ ਏ ॥ ਮੂੰਹ ਆਈ ਬਾਤ ਨ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਏ. (ਬੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ)

<sup>133</sup> ਬਜਰ ਕਪਾਟ ਜੜੇ ਜੜਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਖੋਲਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੩). ਬਜਰ ਕਪਾਟ ਨ ਖੁਲਨੀ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਖੁਲੀਜੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੪) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਹਥਿ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਹੋਰਤੁ ਖੁਲੈ ਨਾਹੀ, ਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੈ ਭਾਗਿ ਮਿਲਾਵਣਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪)॥

Sikhism aspires for this mystical stage and the Guru says that when one follows the Guru's instructions and eventually reaches this highest stage of spiritual attainment, he meets God.<sup>134</sup> This is where the devotee always remains attuned to the "Word" and hears the celestial music (ਅਨਹਦ ਨਾਦ) day and night.<sup>135</sup>

*Dasam Duar* does not exist in the physical or material world. It is a mental state in which the devotee comprehends the expanse of the universe and the laws of nature governing everything. It is as it were a window or a spiritual door to the wonders of the Almighty (*Sach Khand*)<sup>136</sup>, which opens through the harmonious union of the senses.

It was at this level of spiritual attainment that Truth was revealed to our Gurus as divine favour. They uttered their hymns in spiritual ecstasy in this ecstatic spiritual stage and their hymns therefore are a key to the *Dasam Duar* and through it to *Sach Khand*.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>134</sup> ਦਸਵੇਂ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਕੁੰਚੀ ਜਬ ਦੀਜੈ ਤਉ ਦਇਆਲ ਕੇ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਕੀਜੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੪੧) ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਚੁਆਇਆ । ਦਸਵੇਂ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਹੋਇ ਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੬੯)

<sup>135</sup> ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਵਾਜਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਬਾਜੇ ਗਾਈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਾਣੀ (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੪੨) ਅਣਮਤਿਆ ਮੰਦਲੁ ਬਾਜੈ, ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਵਣ ਘਨਹਰੁ ਗਾਜੈ, ਬਾਦਲ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਰਖਾ ਹੋਈ, ਜਉ ਤਤੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ ਕੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੭). Usually it is understood that the primordial sound is composed of the best five unstuck musical tunes and their vibration is still felt in all matter whether animate or inanimate. ਪੰਚ ਸਬਦ ਬੁਣਕਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਆਪੇ ਵਾਇ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੦) ਵਾਜੇ ਪੰਚ ਸਬਦ ਤਿਤੁ ਘਰਿ ਸਭਾਗੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੭) Yogis also believed this. "Music is a revelation: a revelation loftier than all wisdom and all philosophy." (Beethoven)

<sup>136</sup> ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮)

<sup>137</sup> ਗੁਰੁ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਪਾਹੂ ਨਿਵਲੁ ਮਨੁ ਕੋਠਾ ਤਨੁ ਛਤਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਤਾਕ ਨ ਉਘੜੇ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਹਬ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੩੭)

## Chapter Five

### Shabad (Word)

The friction of two objects produces sound.<sup>138</sup> When sound patterns are joined together in a particular way they give rise to meaningful words. God independently produced the primal sound when He assumed a manifested form from His un-manifested state. The mystical celestial sound produced by God in this process is usually compared with the bursting of a fruit<sup>139</sup> and is described as WORD.

Most religions of the world believe that everything in the Universe came out of this uncreated word of God (ਸ਼ਬਦਾਬ੍ਰਹਮ).<sup>140</sup> Almost all of them call the “Word” omnipresent invisible wave (ਅਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਧਾਰਾ), which is infinite (ਬੇਅੰਤ, ਅਸੀਮ) and is the source of emancipation. The intuitive effect of the Shabad (Word) is a very sweet musical sound. According to Sikhism the whole universe came out of this one Word, which is present in the universe in sound, light, and motion in changing and changeable forms of energy.<sup>141</sup>

The “Word” has been given different names by different religions. The Muslims call it Kalam-e-ilahi, Awaz-e-Mustkim, Sultan-ul-Azkar, Ism-e-zaat, ‘Kun Fayukun’, ‘Bang-e-Asmani’, ‘Nad-e-Sultani’, ‘Sawt-e-Sarmadi’ (ਸੌਤੋ ਸਰਮਦੀ), ‘Ism-e-Azam’, Sultan-e-Alafa or ‘Sultan-ul-Azkar etc.,’

<sup>138</sup> Such sound is called ਆਹਤ (Frictional). Another sound is continuous, limitless and is not produced by friction. Mystics call it ਅਨਾਹਤ (ਅਨਾਹਤ). It was produced by God and is the basis of creation.

<sup>139</sup> Scientists call it “Big Bang” It produced light, sound and heat energy (which is necessary for life). ਜਹ ਝਿਲਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਾਹੁ ਦਿਸਤਾ ॥ ਤਹ ਅਨਹਤ ਸਬਦ ਬਜਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੭) ਜਹ ਅਨਹਤ ਸੂਰ ਉਜਾਰਾ ॥ ਤਹ ਦੀਪਕ ਜਲੈ ਛੰਛਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੭)

<sup>140</sup> ਸਭੁ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੪) ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਅਪਾਰ ਸਦਾਇਆ । ਓਅੰਕਾਰਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਧੁਨਿ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਅਕਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ (ਭ: ਗੂ ਵਾਰ ੨੬/੨)

<sup>141</sup> ਉਤਪਤਿ ਪਰਲਉ ਸਬਦੇ ਹੋਵੈ, ਸਬਦੇ ਹੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭) ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਏਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਵਰਤੈ ਸਭ ਏਕਸ ਤੇ ਉਤਪਤਿ ਚਲੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੩੪) ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਸਬਦ ਵਰਤੈ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਾਚਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੧) ਸਭ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੪) Shamas Tabrez says, " ਆਲਮ ਅਜ ਸੌਤ ਜਹੂਰ ਗ੍ਰਿਫਤ, ਅਜ ਹਜ਼ੂਰਸ ਬਸਾਤਿ ਨੂਰ ਗ੍ਰਿਫਤ" (The universe came into existence from Word (ਸੌਤ) and all light originated from it). “Understand the primordial ‘Word’ forgetting all books. Illumine yourself within. How many books will you read?” (Hazrat Sai Qutab Ali Shah).

Sometimes in the Holy Quran it is also mentioned as 'Word' (For example Quran 6:7) or Haq (Truth) as in Quran 36:82.<sup>142</sup>

The Hindu Rishis called it 'Nad', 'Vak (or Vach)', 'Akashbani' (ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਵਾਣੀ), 'Dibh-dhuni' (ਦਿੱਭ ਧੁਨੀ), and 'Dev Dhun'. (ਦੇਵ ਧੁਨ), or ਉਦਗੀਤ ॥ It is a common belief among the Hindus that the sound of the word of God was Om (ਓਮ).<sup>143</sup>

The Greeks called the "Word" Logos, Nous or Noumenon and defined it by saying that 'Logos' is one and only, it pervades the universe and is unchangeable. It is God's law, God's Will and God Himself.

The Christians and the Jews call it 'Memra'. It appears to have been derived from Armenian word 'Amer' which means 'Word' (ਸ਼ਬਦ, ਬਾਣੀ). The Jews define it as God's Word or 'God's Hukam (ਹੁਕਮ)' and consider it as God's invisible fiat, by which creation came into existence.<sup>144</sup>

In the Chinese Scripture 'Tau' has been eulogised a lot. 'Tau' is defined as eternal Word, Truth, rationality, repository of spiritual knowledge, mystical element, or a principle giving motion to mind and matter. The Chinese say that 'Tau' is the basis of the creation of the universe and everything exists in 'Tau'.

The Parsees call it "Sarosha". It is said to have existed before earth, vegetation and fire came into being. It is God's (Ahuramazda's) Will that creates the world, sustains it and destroys it. It is piety, religion and reality all in one.

---

<sup>142</sup> Maulana Roomi called it Naam (ਨਾਮ). Muslims believe that God said, "Kun Fayukun (ਕੁਨ ਫਾਯੁਕੁਨ). He said, 'Be' and everything came into existence. ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਓ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਓ (ਜਪੁਜੀ)

<sup>143</sup> "Word is truly God. Word is the highest truth." (Kath Upnishad XV 24) Word is ਪ੍ਰਣਵ or eternal God (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਨਾਦ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ ਸ਼ਲੋਕ ੨੪). The word is OM. "ਯੁਜੀਤ ਪ੍ਰਵੈ ਚੇਤਹ ਪਣ੍ਵੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਿਭੈਯਮ॥ ਪ੍ਰਣਵੇ ਨਿਤਯਯੁਕਤਸਯ ਨ ਭਯੰ ਵਿਧਤੇ ਕਵਚਿਤ" (Mandukya Upnishad-Gaudapad's 25<sup>th</sup> Karika) "The mind must be unified with OM because OM is Brahman, the fearless. He who is unified with OM knows no fear. Hindus prefix this word with many Mantras. "ਜਿਹਤਾ ਮਨੁਖ ਓਅੰ (ਓਮ) ਅਖਰ ਦਾ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਪਰਮਗਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ" (ਗੀਤਾ VIII.13)

<sup>144</sup> Your "Word" has been true from the beginning and your Will is unquestionable (Psalms 1.11) "In the beginning was the "Word" and the "Word" was God. (John 1.12) ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਵਾਜੈ ਕਿੰਗੁਰੀ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ 62)

Guru Nanak Dev named it *Sat Naam* (ਸਤਿਨਾਮ), which is synonymous with 'Word'.<sup>145</sup> Guru Arjan Dev said that the main aim of every religion is to attune with *Naam* (ਨਾਮ). "In Guru Nanak's house we deal in Naam".<sup>146</sup> Guru Granth Sahib tells us "All attributes of the Universe can be described through the 52 letters (of Sanskrit alphabet) but the attributes of divine "Word" cannot be explained through any letter or word of the alphabet".<sup>147</sup>

Our five senses provide us knowledge of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. Shabad (sound of the primal Word) is served by two senses that of hearing and seeing (when the Word is written). The real knowledge and therefore enjoyment of the Shabad (sound) lies only in hearing. Written Shabad is an imitation of the real. The 'Word' (Shabad) in Gurbani is used interchangeably for both hearing and reading. The written word only helps us in understanding a part of the reality and is not a substitute for the real 'Word'. However with practice it leads us to the real 'Word'.

This divine 'Word' is within us all but most of the time we are disconnected from it. The question for the God men has been how to understand the "Word" that created the universe and promulgated God's law. In order to make it intelligible to ordinary human beings, the religious preceptors (*Gurus, Sants or Murshids*) devote their psychic energies and get in tune with it. They then try to explain the God's Word in their own language, which ordinary people can understand. Having done so they leave their findings in the Scripture. According to Sikhism the devotee succeeds in attuning to *Naam* through Gurbani (Shabad) and thus reaches his destination (the primordial Word).<sup>148</sup> Acknowledging the ultimate importance of the "Word" the Guru says, "I died for the world through Shabad and was then raised to life through it. Thus I obtained salvation.

<sup>145</sup> ਏਕ ਨਾਮਿ ਜੁਗ ਚਾਰਿ ਉਧਾਰੇ ਸਬਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਵਿਸਾਰਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੫). "ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰੂਪੀ ਅਕਾਰ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਜਾਮਾ ਪਹਿਨਿਆ.....

ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰੂਪੀ ਸਾਕਾਰੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਜਪ ਜਪ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਵਿਖੇ, ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਵਿਖੇ, ਲੀਨ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਸੱਚੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਜੁਗਤੀ ਹੈ" ('ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਦਾਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ' - ਭਾਈ ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫)

<sup>146</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮੁ" (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੬) "ਉਹੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਜੋ ਖੰਡਾਂ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ, ਜਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਕਈ ਭਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਵਿਤਰ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਆਪ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਭ ਸੰਗਤ ਤੋਂ ਕਰਵਾਈ ॥ ('ਸਚਾ ਗੁਰੂ' ਗਿਆਨੀ ਊਧਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੨)

<sup>147</sup> ਬਾਵਨ ਅਛਰ ਲੋਕ ਤ੍ਰੇ ਸਭੁ ਕਛੁ ਇਨ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ, ਏ ਅਖਰ ਖਿਰਿ ਜਾਹਿਗੇ ਓਇ ਅਖਰ ਇਨ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੪੦)

<sup>148</sup> ਸਬਦੇ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਉ ਉਪਜੈ ਸਬਦੇ ਮੇਲ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ, ਬਿਨ ਸਬਦੈ ਸਭਿ ਜਗ ਬਉਰਾਨਾ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮ ਗਵਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੪). Gurbani is *Naam* in essence.

The Word cleanses the mind and the body and in the clean mind God enters to sanctify it.”<sup>149</sup> “Without the Word (knowledge) humans are like blind people fumbling in darkness”.<sup>150</sup>

Human soul is subtle. It is not something physical. The source of an abstract subtle thing must also be subtle. ‘Word’ is subtle and is the nearest thing to God. In Gurbani the phraseology used by Bhattas to describe Guru Nanak is equally subtle and mystical. For example they describe him not merely as a human being but as a “Carrier of the light” (ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ) or carrier of energy (ਕਲਾ ਧਾਰ). Here the light or energy means the spiritual wisdom or power of the Word. Guru Nanak was Guru only as long as he was the disseminator of the mystical ‘Word’.

## 5.1 Shabad Guru?

A question is sometimes raised about the potentiality of *Shabad* to guide the human beings. In other words it is said that only a living human being can be a Guru. It should be understood that the key issue is self-examination (The Psychologists call it introspection),<sup>151</sup> which is possible only through knowledge. The Guru is the source of *Shabad* or spiritual knowledge.<sup>152</sup> The physical body of the Guru is necessary only as long as it imparts knowledge, which the Guru communicates through ‘Word’ (Shabad). The Guru says, “The word is the Guru and the Guru is the word.”<sup>153</sup> A silent Guru or a statue cannot do this. Therefore in the real sense the Word (Shabad) is the Guru.<sup>154</sup> It is God’s message mystically inscribed in the creation. We have noted this in the previous chapters that ‘Word’ created everything in the universe and made life possible.

<sup>149</sup> ਹਮ ਸਬਦਿ ਮੁਏ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਾਰਿ ਜੀਵਾਲੇ ਭਾਈ ਸਬਦੇ ਹੀ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਾਈ, ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ, ਬਿਨ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗ ਬਉਰਾਨੰ (ਮ:੧) ਸਬਦੇ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਰਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਮਨਿ ਆਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦੧)

<sup>150</sup> ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਨਾ ਪੋਖੀਐ ਜਗੁ ਬੋਲਾ ਅੰਨ੍ਹਾ ਭਰਮਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੯)

<sup>151</sup> ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਨੁ ਆਪਾ ਚੀਨੈ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੮) ਜਿਨ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੦) ਸਬਦੈ ਸਾਦੁ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਤਾ ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫) ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿਆ ਅਉਧੂ ਨਿਕਸੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦੮)

<sup>152</sup> ਗਿਆਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਆਤਮ ਉਪਦੇਸਹੁ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਭਤਿ ਲਗਾਓ (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ੧੦)

<sup>153</sup> ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੨) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਚਨ ਬਚਨ ਹੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਾਧਰ ਮੁਕਤ ਜਨਾਵੈਗੇ (ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮ:੪) ਗੁਰੁ ਦਰਸਨ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਹੈ (ਵਾਰ ੩੯/੧੭) ਸਬਦ ਬਿੰਦੇ ਰੇ ਅਵਧੂ ਸਬਦ ਬਿੰਦੇ ਬਾਨ ਮਾਨ ਸਭ ਧੰਧਾ ॥ ਆਤਮਾ ਮਧੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀਸੈ ਜਿਉਂ ਜਲ ਮਧੇ ਚੰਦਾ” (ਗੋਰਖ ਨਾਥ Gorakh Bani by Pitamber Datt Barthwal P.44)

<sup>154</sup> ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੋਲਾ (ਵਾਰ ੭/੨੦) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ, ਬਿਨ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗ ਬਉਰਾਨੰ (ਮ:੧)



Only the Guru's 'Word', through concentration, can wash our sins and lead us to the universal primal 'Word'.<sup>155</sup> It is in this sense that the Guru claims that his word contains the essence of the Primal 'Word', which was uttered by God.<sup>156</sup>

For the Sikhs the 'Word' is available in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib and therefore they need no other human Guru for spiritual instruction. Guru Arjan Dev himself pointed out that the Holy Granth is the "Throne of the Almighty and a compendium of complete instruction."<sup>157</sup> It need not be mentioned that the real thing is the 'Word' and not the paper, ink, or the cloth covering the Holy Granth. This point is clarified by saying ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਰਸਨਾ (God dwells on the tongue of the *Saint*) where the tongue is not a dwelling house but the carrier of the 'Word'.

Concerning the Shabad, the Guru has also used the word 'Sewa'. "The sewa of the Guru is to understand his word."<sup>158</sup> Therefore in the final analysis the "Word" itself is not as important as the message it conveys. One who has fully imbibed the message of the 'Word' reaches his spiritual home loaded with truth and honour. "The Guru's instruction is a treasury of pearls and diamonds if only the devotee searches for them." Further the Guru says, "The Guru's instruction is like the company of a spiritually enlightened person."<sup>159</sup>

## 5.2 Guru

Literally, the word Guru means 'a teacher', 'a guide' or 'an instructor'. In the context of religion, Guru is personified as "a preceptor who dispels darkness and floods the soul with spiritual knowledge".<sup>160</sup>

<sup>155</sup> ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਭਵਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੮) ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਕੋਟਿ ਪਾਪ ਪਰਹਰੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੨੪) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੩)

<sup>156</sup> ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੬) 1) ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦ ਹੈ ਨਿੱਤਰ ਧਾਰ ਵਰ੍ਹੈ ਗੁਣ ਗੁੰਝੈ (ਵਾਰ ੭/੧੯)

<sup>157</sup> ਪੋਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗੁਣ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੨੬)

<sup>158</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੩) ॥ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਸਚੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਪਿਆਰਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੨)

<sup>159</sup> (1) ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਣਕ ਸੇਵੇ ਸਿਖੁ ਸੁ ਖੋਜਿ ਲਹੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੨੮) (੨) ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਿਨਸਿਓ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਤਾਪੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੧੭)

<sup>160</sup> ਗੁ is derived from Sanskrit ਗ੍ਰੀ meaning 'to swallow' and ਰੂ means light. "ਗੁਰਾ ਰਾਸਤ ਅੰਧਕਾਰਾ ਸਿਯਾਤ ਕਾਰਸ ਤਮ ਨਿਰੋਧਕ ॥ ਅੰਧਕਾਰਾ ਵਿਨਸ ਤਵਾਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਿਤਯਭਿਧੀਯਤੇ ॥ Guru means a guide that swallows the darkness (of mis-knowledge) and brings in light of knowledge. Kane Upanishad advises the devotee to say, "ਤਮਸੋਮਾ ਜਯੋਤੀਰਗਮਯ" (ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹਨੇਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਚਾਨਣ ਵਲ ਲੈ ਚੱਲ). Some people propose a slightly different derivation ਗੁ=ਗੋ (ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ) and ਰੂ=ਪਾਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ (ਪ੍ਰਥਵੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਯਾਨੀ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਭੋਜਨ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲਾ)

It is in this later sense that this word has been extensively used in Gurbani. The Gurus (some times called *Murshids, Satgurus or Sants*) are rare specimens of humanity. Almost all religions agree that a True Guru is overwhelmed with the supreme presence of the Lord and is internally attuned to the voice of God.<sup>161</sup> He is therefore personified human God equivalent and is divinely authorised to transmit and instil word-sound of God (spiritual ecstasy) into the human heart.<sup>162</sup> A Guru can be said to have two centres of consciousness, one human and one divine, He may speak to the world from human consciousness but reveal divine secrets<sup>163</sup>.

The word Guru has been used in Sikhism to refer to (1) the ten Sikh Gurus (2) The blessed Shabad of the Guru called Gurbani and (3) God.<sup>164</sup> No other object or person can take the place of a “Guru” for the Sikhs.

As a communicator of God’s commands the Guru offers instructions through Shabad (word), which contains the essence of *Naam*. Its effects are corporate as well as individual. Concentration on the Guru’s word leads the novitiate to *Vismad* (wonderment- ecstasy) and appreciation of God’s bounties. *Vismad* acts as a stimulus to regular and exalted meditation bringing in immense joy, tranquillity, serenity, and peace. Once this happens the path is clear. The human soul begins to ascend higher and higher spiritual levels of understanding and ultimately reaches its destination.

In Sikhism a human Guru is as much respected as God<sup>165</sup> but is not considered God or a plenipotentiary of God. Again the Guru is not the physical human body but the “word” of the Guru. According to Sikhism a human Guru does not run away from the tempestuous maelstrom of life but lives as a part of it. He opposes renunciation, celibacy, extreme austerity, and penance and like all other human beings discharges the obligations of a married life.

He does not act like a magician showing miracles to attract followers and neither does he arrogate to himself the sole agency of reserving seats for

<sup>161</sup> ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਕਲਿਜੁਗ ਬੋਹਿਥੁ ਹੋਇ ( ਪੰਨਾ.੫੫੨) ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿੰਦੇ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਥਾ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ (ਪ.੧੨੬੪)

<sup>162</sup> ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸੋ ਹਰਿ ਜੇਹਾ ॥ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਮਾਣਸ ਦੇਹਾ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ੧੦੭੬) ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਹੀ ਭੇਦ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੪੨)

<sup>163</sup> ਅਦ੍ਰਿਸਟੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਿ ਦੀਨੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੮)

<sup>164</sup> ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੯)

<sup>165</sup> ਸਗਲ ਸੂਖ ਆਨੰਦ ਅਰੋਗ ॥ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਨਿਰਜੋਗ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੧) “Totally peaceful, blissful and without human weaknesses. Impartial and completely detached.”.

his followers in heaven. He considers principles superior to personality and is ever prepared to lay down his life to defend the principles. These doctrines are unique to Sikhism and sharply distinguish Sikh Gurus from other world teachers of religion who claimed exclusive rights to divinity, incarnation (*ਅਵਤਾਰਵਾਦ*) or revelation (*ਵਹੀ-ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਬਾਣੀ*).

### 5.3 Need of a Guru

A question is usually asked, “Why can’t we achieve high spiritual status without a Guru?”

It is a fact of life that we love only those things that we see or about which we obtain knowledge through our five senses. Again out of these we love those things most, which are close to us for example our parents, children, relatives, friends etc.<sup>166</sup> Since God is without shape, colour, or other visible identity, we do not automatically develop love for Him.

There is a soul within us, which is a spark of the divine but the mechanism to take us to the secret treasure of the soul (*ਗੰਜੇ ਮਖਫੀ*) is not known to us. The Guru delineates the route and takes us to the journey's end by guiding us step by step. About this route Maulana Roomi says, “My friend the route to God is narrow. No body can walk on it without the assistance of a Guide (*ਆਰਿਫ*)”.<sup>167</sup> Just as we cannot obtain heat without a source of heat, we cannot enshrine Godly love in our hearts unless we associate with a Guru who has become a source of such love.<sup>168</sup> The Guru knows the way fully well and guides the novitiate with spiritual light”.<sup>169</sup> Searching for God without a Guru is like searching for the wake of a fish in water.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>166</sup> ਜਾਹੂ ਕਾਹੂ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਹੀ ਚਿਤਿ ਆਵੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੧੫)

<sup>167</sup> “ਸਖਤ ਬਾਰੀਕ ਅਸਤ ਰਾਹਿ ਆਂ ਹਬੀਬ, ਕੈ ਰਵਦ ਬਰ ਇਸਤਕਾਮਤ ਜੁਜ਼ ਲਬੀਬ” ॥

<sup>168</sup> ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਉ ਘਰ ਵਾਸੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੮) “ਜਿਸ ਕੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਸੀਖ ਤਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੯)

<sup>169</sup> ਸੋਖਿ ਨੂਰਾਨੀ ਜ ਰਹ ਆਗਾਹ ਕੁਨਦ, ਬਾ ਸੁਖਨ ਹਮ ਨੂਰ ਰਾ ਹਮਰਾਹ ਕੁਨਦ (ਮੋਲਾਨਾ ਰੂਮੀ ਮਸਨਵੀ ੫)

<sup>170</sup> ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਮਝੇ ਮਾਛਲੇ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਪੇਖਣੋ ਨਾ ਜਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੫)

It should be clear that the “Word”(Shabad, Naam)), the Sound (Naad) and the God’s law (Hukam) are all abstract terms. Abstractions are always difficult to understand. The work becomes easier with the help of somebody who has the experience in the field. A Guru has already travelled on the road to spirituality and therefore his guidance is like eyes to the blind. Sikhism considers the Guru as a bridge between the devotee and God. Gurbani says that we should not be fooled by the outward human appearance of the Guru. He is like a wave in an ocean, which is separate from the ocean and is yet a part of it.<sup>171</sup> God showers His benedictions on the Gurus and, they voluntarily assume the duty to guide others on the path to God's door<sup>172</sup>. “It is not difficult to find a Guru to help in worldly affairs but spiritual guides are rare.”<sup>173</sup>

Different people have described the *Guru* or *Murshid* through different allegories. Some say the Guru is like a stonecutter who chisels the stone and leaves it in the form of a beautiful statue. Others compare him with soap that washes the cloth clean. The Guru cleans the devotee’s mind and instils “Naam” in it.<sup>174</sup> Yet others say that like a Chandan tree, the Guru spreads the fragrance of “Naam” among all who happen to be near him. The Guru is thus a human incarnation of the Spirit, a mystical voice of *Akal Purkh*.<sup>175</sup> He is the messenger and the message in one. Once we understand the message we become one with the messenger. Since the messenger lives in the love of God, he directs the novitiate towards the Divine love by penetrating with exceptional versatility into the domain of the follower’s private and spiritual experiences. In a word we can say that the Guru’s divine aim is transfiguration of the novitiate through direction consciousness

In Gurbani the Guru is compared to a gardener watering the dying plant, which becomes verdant after the gardener's care. He lends growth and life to the dying. He waters it with his ambrosial glance.<sup>176</sup> Guru Arjan Dev compares an ordinary individual with a wayfarer who has lost his way.

<sup>171</sup> ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਉਠਿਹਿ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤੀ, ਫਿਰ ਸਲਲੇ ਸਲਲ ਸਮਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੭੬). This is known in Islam as *Barakah*, which is the source of *A-tajalli* (self-manifestation- enlightenment).

<sup>172</sup> “ਗੁਰੂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਦਾ ਅਭੇਦ ਹਨ, ਪ੍ਰੰਤੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ (ਹਸਤੀ) ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਭਿੰਨ (ਵਖਰੀ) ਹੈ (ਭਾਈ ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ) “ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਦਾਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪) ਮੌਜੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਗਰਚਿ ਦਰ ਮਾਅਨੀ ਯਕੇਸਤ । ਲੋਕਾਂਦਰ ਈਨੇ ਅੰ ਫਰਕੇ ਬਸੇਸਤ = ਲਹਿਰ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਅਸਲੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਹੀ ਹਨ ਪ੍ਰੰਤੂ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਰਕ ਹੈ । (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>173</sup> ਮੁਰਸ਼ਦੇ ਹਰ ਚੀਜ਼ ਮੇ ਬਾਸਦ ਬਸੇ, ਮੁਰਸ਼ਦੇ ਕਾਮਲ ਕੁਜਾ ਯਾਬਦ ਕਸੇ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>174</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਦਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਆਪਿ ਮਿਲਾਵੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ। (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯)

<sup>175</sup> ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਏਕਾ ਵਰਤੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਭਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੩) ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਪੁ ਰਖਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਲੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਾਬਾਸਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੯੬)

<sup>176</sup> ਸੂਕੇ ਹਰੇ ਕੀਏ ਖਿਨ ਮਾਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟ ਸੰਚ ਜੀਵਾਏ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯੧) ਨਾਮੁ ਰਤਨੁ ਤਿਨਾ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਭਜਿ ਪਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੩੪)

The Guru guides him on the right path and the traveller reaches his destination.<sup>177</sup> It is by good luck that one meets a True Guru guide who directs one to the right path.<sup>178</sup>

Guru Angad Dev says, “Humans are imprisoned in the house (human body) locked from outside by mammon. This lock can be opened only with the help of the True Guru.”<sup>179</sup> He opens the inner door of our mind and leaves us in the presence of the Lord.<sup>180</sup> Bhai Nand Lal says, “If you wish to see God then find a perfect Guru. The perfect Guru is the embodiment of God whose closeness beatifies the soul and lends peace to the mind.”<sup>181</sup> Although the Guru lives in the world like other human beings, he keeps aloof of worldly entanglements and is not influenced by power or pelf, honour or dishonour. He is always imbued with God’s name and remains unruffled by criticism or malice. Shamas Tabrez has called the Guru’s hand as God’s hand and his eye as “God’s eye.”<sup>182</sup>

The Guru is like God in human form (*Sargun*)<sup>183</sup>, constantly in communication with God, and is divinely authorised to transmit and instil voice of God into the human heart. His Shabad (*Naam*) is the instrument of the Guru. It acts like a ship that ferries the passengers (seekers of truth) across the tempestuous Sea.<sup>184</sup> The Guru starts the process by diverting the mind of the novitiate from the world. He plants the “Shabad” in the devotee’s mind and once the devotee imbibes it the Guru’s presence never leaves him.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>177</sup> ਮਾਰਗ ਪਾਏ ਉਦਿਆਨ ਮਹਿ ਗੁਰਿ ਦਸੇ ਭੇਤ (ਮ:ਪ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੧੦) ਭੂਲੇ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਜਿਨਹਿ ਬਤਾਇਆ ਐਸਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ.੮੦੩) ਆਖਿ ਹਯਾਤਿ ਮਾ ਸੁਖਨਿ ਪੀਰ ਕਾਮਲ ਅਸਤ ॥ ਦਿਲਹਾਇ ਮਰਦਾ ਰਾ ਬ-ਕੁਨਦ ਜਿੰਦਾ-ਓ ਖਲਾਸ ॥ ਪੂਰਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸਬਦ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ । ਉਹ ਮੁਰਦਾ ਦਿਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਤ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਮੁਕਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ । (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਜਿ ਦਿਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸੋ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਸਿਖੀ ਕੰਨੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੪)

<sup>178</sup> ਵਡੈ ਭਾਗਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਪੁਨਾ ਪਾਇਓ ਗੁਰਿ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਹਰਿਨਾਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਓ (ਪੰਨਾ.੭੧੫)

<sup>179</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਪਾਹੁ ਨਿਵਲ ਮਨ ਕੋਨਾ ਤਨ ਛਤ, ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਤਾਕੁ ਨ ਉਘੜੈ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਹਥਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੩) “ਆਂ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹਿ ਆਲਮ ਦਰਬਸਤਹ ਬੂਦ ਮੁਹਕਮ, ਪੋਸ਼ੀਦ ਦਲਕਿ ਆਦਮ ਯਾਨੀ ਕਿ ਬਰ ਦਰ ਆਮਦ। (ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ ਤਬਰੇਜ਼) God imprisons himself in a human body and appears as a Guru to open the doors for his followers.”

<sup>180</sup> ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਘਰੁ ਦਿਖਾਇ ਦੇਇ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸੁਜਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯੦)

<sup>181</sup> ਗਰ ਹਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਬਾ ਖੁਦਾ ਬਾਯਦ ਬਤੋ, ਦਰ ਹਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਮੁਰਸ਼ਦਿ ਕਾਮਿਲ ਬਰੋ ॥ ਸੂਰਤਿ ਹੱਕ ਮੁਰਸ਼ਦਿ ਕਾਮਿਲ ਬਵਦ, ਦੀਦਨਸ਼ ਆਰਾਮ ਜਾਨੋ ਦਿਲ ਬਵਦ ( ਕੁਲਯਾਤ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਗੋਇਆ ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਪਾਦਿਤ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪ )

<sup>182</sup> ਚਸਮੇ ਉ ਮਸਤੇ ਖੁਦਾ, ਦਸਤੇ ਉ ਦਸਤੇ ਖੁਦਾ (ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ ਤਬਰੇਜ਼) ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਭਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੪੨)

<sup>183</sup> ਜੋ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਰਾਤਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋਈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩) ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ ਨਿਸਦਿਨੁ ਭਜੈ ਰੂਪ ਰਾਮ ਤਿਹ ਜਾਨੁ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਹਰਿ ਅੰਤਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚੀ ਮਾਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੮)

<sup>184</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬੋਹਿਥਾ ਸ਼ਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੦੯) ਨਾਮੁ ਰਤਨੁ ਤਿਨਾ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਭਜਿ ਪਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੩੪)

<sup>185</sup> ਸਫਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਾਥੈ, ਜਤ ਕਤ ਪੁਖਉ ਤਤ ਤਤ ਸਾਥੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੫)

He purifies him from misdeeds, and materialistic attractions through his own example.<sup>186</sup> The devotee dies to the world and is re-born in spirit.<sup>187</sup> Thus liberated the mind becomes fit to follow the path to glory delineated by the Guru<sup>188</sup>.

Spiritual knowledge, also known as celestial light (ਜੋਤ, ਨੂਰ)<sup>189</sup>, is transferred by the Guru to his fully attuned follower<sup>190</sup> like an electric current flowing from high voltage into a low voltage receptor. Once the two come at the same voltage the giver (Guru) and recipient (follower) become spiritually one and there remains no spiritual difference between them.<sup>191</sup> Bhai Gurdas explains this process by citing the example of a lamp lighting another lamp.<sup>192</sup> Elsewhere he gives the example of a *Chandan* tree, which imparts its qualities to another tree growing close by. The Guru helps only those who have taken the route suggested by him and have faithfully followed it. The pleasure of the Guru is therefore necessary because there is no secret between God and the Guru.

Bhai Nand Lal was of the opinion that one should keep away from those who have no Guru because only the true Guru can guide the novitiate on the right path.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>186</sup> ਹਮ ਸਬਦਿ ਮੁਏ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਾਰਿ ਜੀਵਾਲੇ ਭਾਈ ਸਬਦੇ ਹੀ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਸਬਦੇ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਰਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਮਨਿ ਆਈ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਦਾਤਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦੧) “I died in the Shabad, and through the Shabad, I am dead while yet alive. O siblings of destiny, through the Shabad, I have been liberated”. Sorath M.3 Ghar 1 Page 601)

<sup>187</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਜੋ ਮਰਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਏ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੨) ਕਬੀਰ ਐਸਾ ਏਕੁ ਆਪੁ ਜੋ ਜੀਵਤ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕੁ ਹੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੪) “ਦਰ ਅੰ ਜ਼ਮਾਂ ਕਿ ਨ ਆਈ ਬਯਾਦ ਮੇ ਮਰੀਮ । ਬਗੈਰ ਯਾਦਿ ਤੋ ਜੀ ਜੀਸਤਨ ਚਿ ਸੂਦ ਮਰਾ (ਭ; ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) ਜਦ ਤੂੰ ਵਿਸਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹਾਂ । ਤੇਰੇ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਇਸ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਲਾਭ । ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਆਪੋ ਚੀਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਤਿਆ ਇਵ ਮਰੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੫)

<sup>188</sup> ਕਰਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਹਬੁ ਧਰਿ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਮਾਰਿ ਕਢੀਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

<sup>189</sup> ਮੰਦਰਿ ਮੇਰੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਉਜਾਰਾ ॥ ਅਨਦ ਬਿਨੋਦੀ ਖਸਮ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੪)

<sup>190</sup> ਜਾਂ ਸੁਧੋਸੁ ਤਾਂ ਲਹਣਾ ਟਿਕਿਓਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੭) (When completely reformed, then Lehna was anointed)

<sup>191</sup> ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਮਾਰਿ ਆਪੁ ਆਪੈ ਸੋਝੀ ਮਿਕਿਓਨ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੮) The spiritual light of one merged into the other and the Guru himself anointed the follower. ਹਮੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਮੁ ਅੰਗਦ ਅਸਤ, ਹਮੁ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਅਫਜਲੋ ਅਮਜਦ ਅਸਤ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) Nanak and Angad are one and similarly Amar Das is raised high by Angad Dev.

<sup>192</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਘੇਰ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ਡੂਬਿ ਮੁਏ ਬਿਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੫) ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗ ਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਰਖ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਫਲ ਪਲਿਆ ॥ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਈਅਨੁ ਦੀਵੇ ਤੇ ਜਿਉ ਦਵਿਾ ਬਲਿਆ ( ਵਾਰ ੨੪/੮) ਜੋਤਿ ਓਹਾ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਇ ਸਹ ਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰ ਪਲਟੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੬)॥

<sup>193</sup> “ਨਾਮੇ ਬੇ ਮੁਰਸ਼ਿਦ ਮਿਆਵਰ ਬਰ ਜੁਬਾਂ, ਮੁਰਸ਼ਿਦ ਕਾਮਿਲ ਦਿਹਦ ਅਜ ਹੱਕ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਂ” ॥ (ਕੁਲਯਾਤ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਗੋਯਾ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩) “ਨਿਗੁਰੇ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਨ ਲਿਆ । ਕਾਮਲ ਮੁਰਸ਼ਿਦ (ਸੱਚਾ ਗੁਰੂ) ਹੀ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਬਹੁ ਪਤਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ” “ਬਿਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਲਾਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਹ ਮਾਰਗ ਅਤਿ ਸੂਖਮ ਅਤੇ ਤਰਕ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੈ (ਕਠ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ ੧,੨:੮)॥

## Chapter Six

### Guru Nanak's Guru

In Sikhism a Guru is given a very prominent place and it is believed that even if we receive all the knowledge of every field in the Universe, we will still be in the dark without the spiritual guidance of the Guru.<sup>194</sup> Washisht trained the Hindu prophet Ram Chandra. Sandeepan Rishi and Angra Rishi trained Krishna. Christ is reported by some people to have obtained instruction from the Buddhists. But when we talk of Guru Nanak, we find various people mentioning various names as Guru Nanak's preceptors.

Some Muslim historians are openly prejudicial and have ulterior motives. They weave fantastic stories and pass ridiculous invectives against the Gurus in some of their books. For example Hussein Bakhsh writes that Guru Gobind Singh had accepted Islam but gives no positive proof.

Some Western writers too base their findings on guesswork. Their interest in Sikhism arose only after the conquest of the Panjab in the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most of them looked upon Sikhism and other Indian religions through the eyes of the Christian missionaries and therefore did their best not only to deliberately corrupt the Indian religions but also to set one Indian religion against another.<sup>195</sup> An extreme example is found in Mr. F.Pincott's "*A Dictionary of Islam*" (1885 AD) in which he tried to prove that Guru Nanak based his religion on *Yousuf wa Zulaikha*, a romantic and Lecherous story written by Jami.<sup>196</sup>

So far the following have been mentioned as the Gurus of Guru Nanak.

<sup>194</sup> ਜੇ ਸਉ ਚੰਦਾ ਉਗਵਹਿ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜਹਿ ਹਜਾਰ ॥ ਏਤੇ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਇਆ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨ ਘੋਰ ਅੰਧਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੩)

<sup>195</sup> This was the time when books like "Rangila Rasool" (attacking prophet Muhammad), "Satyarath Parkash" (attacking Guru Nanak) and "Dambh Nivaran" (written by Giani Dit Singh in defence of Sikhism) suddenly began to appear. Killings, arson, riots and abductions were the result.

<sup>196</sup> He writes, "It is hardly possible to find a more complete correspondence of ideas than that furnished by the following series from Yusuf wa Zulaikha of Jami, the Persian Sufi and the others. Here he gives some examples.

(a) Sayyad Hussain (b) Zinda Peer (c) Kabir (4) Rama Nand/ Sein

We will examine these claims here briefly.

## 6.1 Sayyad Hussain

Maulvi Ghulam Muhammad the author of “*Siar-ul-Mutakhirin*” (i-110) writes that Sayyad Hussain was the Guru of Guru Nanak.<sup>197</sup> Similarly *Puratan Janam Sakhi* says Kutb-ud-din was the Guru of Guru Nanak. No other source confirms these statements.

This misunderstanding about Sayyad Hussain (or Kutb-ud-din?) appears to have arisen from the fact that Guru Nanak learnt Persian and Arabic languages from Muslim schoolteachers. (See *Janam Sakhi* Bhai Bala Sakhi No. 3 page 6). The same is confirmed in the *Janam Sakhi* of Bhai Mani Singh (part 1 Sakhi No. 6 page 15).

The word Guru is still being used in Asian languages for the schoolteacher. In this connection Cunningham writes, “*In his youth Guru Nanak made himself familiar with the popular creeds both of the Mohammedans and Hindus and that he gained a general knowledge of the Quran. There is no evidence however to confirm that Guru Nanak accepted any particular religious creed beyond learning the art of education and religion.*”

## 6.2 Zinda Peer

John Malcolm (sketch p.14) writes, “*Nanuk is reported by the Mahometans, to have learnt all wordly sciences from Khizzer i.e the prophet Elias.*” In one of the *Janam Sakhis*<sup>198</sup> a part of the story reads,

---

<sup>197</sup> It should be noted that Ghulam Hussain has committed many blunders. For example he writes that Guru Granth Sahib was written and prepared by Guru Nanak in the time of Babar. He writes, “*His collection becoming numerous, it took the form of a book, which was entitled Grant, and became so famous in the times of Sultan Babar, as to give celebrity to its author, who from the day was followed by multitudes of spectators or well-wishers.*”

<sup>198</sup> Presumably written by the Hindalis (a breakaway sect of the Sikhs) who extolled Hindal as a greater Guru than Guru Nanak and intentionally tried to corrupt the Sikh History and scripture. They had coined spurious hymns in the name of Guru Nanak. No contemporary or semi-contemporary source mentions Zinda Peer as the Guru of Guru Nanak.



*“Then Mardana asked him what is the name of the Guru who imparted religious instruction to you? The Guru replied that he is usually known as Baba Zinda”.*<sup>199</sup>

Immediately after these lines the story outlines the attributes of Baba Zinda (living prophet) as supposedly given by Guru Nanak. It reads, *“The whole creation is dependent on Him. Even air, water and fire obey Zinda’s commands.”* Obviously such an entity cannot be human.

It should also be noted that different people have described *Zinda peer* differently. The well-known Indian Philosopher Dr. Pitamber Das Barthwall writes, *“Zinda Peer means an enlightened person and in spiritual terms only God is called Zinda Peer.”* Kabir in his ‘Kabir Granthawali’ also confirms this meaning of *Zind* and writes; *“Kabir says my Lord, the life of the world (Zind), is contactable in the fourth spiritual stage.”*<sup>200</sup> The well-known Hindi writer Bihari Darya uses the same word in exactly the same sense (See ‘Sant Bani’ part 1 page 123).<sup>201</sup> Here again *Zinda* is the master of Trees and the living beings whom the Vedas and the learned people have not been able to find. They only imagine that he exists. Mufti Ghulam Sarwar in his book, *“Tarikh-e-Makhzan-e-Panjab”* (P. 28-29) writes that Sheikh Sadar-ud-Din Sherwani (the founder of Maler Kotla) was known as **Zinda Peer**.

It must however be admitted that a shrine called *Sunder Mandir* exists in Sindh (Pakistan). The Hindus dedicate it to Odero Lal and the Muslims call it the mausoleum of **Zinda Peer** (Khawaja Khizar). The origins of this shrine are steeped in antiquity and nothing much is known about its history.<sup>202</sup>

In his *Bansavlinama* (14/237) Kesar Singh Chhibar writes, *“The ruler named Burn was known as Zinda peer.”*<sup>203</sup>

The encyclopaedia of Islam (Vol 2, P.865) explains that Khawaja Khizar is *“a mythical personality looked upon as the angel of water”*. Dr. Trumpp writes, *“In Sindh and the lower Panjab Khavajah Khidar is worshipped also by the Hindus as the river God Indus under more common name*

<sup>199</sup> ਫੇਰਿ ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਪੁਛਿਆ ਜੀ ਤੁਸਾਨੂੰ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਸੋ ਕਉਣ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਆਹਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਉਂ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਕਿਆ ਆਹਾ ॥ ਤਾਂ ਫੇਰਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹਿਆ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ ਨਾਉਂ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਜਿੰਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ॥”

<sup>200</sup> “ਕਹੈ ਕਬੀਰ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ॥ ਚੌਥੇ ਪਦ ਮਹਿ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਜਿੰਦਾ”॥ (ਕਬੀਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਵਲੀ)

<sup>201</sup> “ਅਛੇ ਬ੍ਰਿਛ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਹਰਿ ਜਿੰਦਾ ਅਜਰ ਅਮਾਨ ॥ ਮੁਨੀਵਰ ਥਾਕੇ ਪੰਡਤਾ ਵੇਦ ਕਹੈ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ” (ਸੰਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੩)

<sup>202</sup> “ਸਿੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਭਖਰ ਪਾਸ ਜਿੰਦ ਪੀਰ ਦਾ “ਸੁੰਦਰ ਮੰਦ” ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਤੋਂ ਪੁੱਜਣ ਲਈ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਬਹੁਤ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ । ਇਸ ਥਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਵੀ ਵਿਰਾਜੇ ਹਨ । ਛੋਟਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ।” (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੩)

<sup>203</sup> “ਰਾਜੇ ਬਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿੰਦ ਪੀਰ”॥

### **Zinda Peer.”**

In the earliest *Janam Sakhi* known as the *Puratan janam Sakhi* we find that Khawaja Khizar when talking about Guru Nanak says to Saido and Seeho, “*O saints I am only water and he is a Guru. I have come out of him many times and have similarly gone back into him many times*”.<sup>204</sup>

It is interesting to note that while listing the names of the followers of Guru Nanak the veteran Sikh writer Bhai Gurdas lists **Zind Peer** among the followers of Guru Nanak.<sup>205</sup>

## **6.3 Bhagat Kabir**

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (V.vii P.632) listed Kabir as the Guru of Guru Nanak and most Western scholars followed suit. For example Gordon (Encyclopaedia of Religion and ethics P.287) writes, “*All that was best and most tolerant in his (Rama Nand’s) system was then taken up by Kabir in the Punjab in the sixteenth century and his great disciple Nanak.*” Gordon’s knowledge is very shallow. Kabir never entered the Punjab throughout his life and neither did he live in the sixteenth century. Another Western writer J.N. Farquhar in his book “Modern Religious movements in India” (P.336) writes, “*Nanak, the founder of the Sikh sect was a disciple of the famous teacher Kabir*”. The same author had earlier written, “An outline of Religious literature in India” in 1920 in which he had expressed a doubt as to the two men having ever met each other. Yet another protagonist of the same idea is Mr. F.E.Keay who called Kabir the Guru of Guru Nanak in his book “*Kabir and His followers.*”

Some writers have even gone to the extent of saying that Guru Nanak himself acknowledged Kabir as his Guru. For example E.W Hopkins in his book “*Religions of India*” writes that Guru Nanak was a nominal founder of the Sikhs “*a body, as Nanak claimed, was embodying the religion of Kabir himself, of whom he claimed to be a follower*”. (Page 511)

---

<sup>204</sup> “ਏ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੇ ਲੋਕ ਮੈਂ ਪਾਨੀ ਹੋਂ ਅਤੈ ਉਹ (ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ) ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ । ਮੈਂ ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਹਾਂ ਅਰ ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਉਸ ਮੈਂ ਸਮਾਇ ਗਿਆ ਹਾਂ ॥

<sup>205</sup> “ਦੁਇਲਤ ਖਾਂ ਲੋਧੀ ਭਲਾ ਹੋਆ ਜਿੰਦ ਪੀਰ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ” (ਵਾਰ ੧੧ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੩)

Elphinston and Hunter copied the same and Raja Siva Parsad in his “*History of Hindustan*” (part I chapter xiii) made use of this myth. None of them quoted any lines from Guru Nanak’s writings to prove their point.<sup>206</sup>

If Kabir were the spiritual preceptor of Guru Nanak, then Guru Nanak would have mentioned his name with great reverence. The fact however is that Guru Nanak has not mentioned Kabir even once in his writings. This is against Gurbani’s dictat, which says, “O pious men it is not proper to conceal the name of the Guru. Those who do so lose all spiritual merit” “Those who do not affirm their Guru shall have no home or place of rest. They lose both this world and the next; they have no place in the Court of the Lord”.<sup>207</sup>

Different writers have given different dates of Kabir’s birth which all fall in the period 1398-1448 AD.<sup>208</sup> Only Mr. Burns (in encyclopaedia of Religion and ethics page 632), without mentioning the source of his information, writes that Kabir lived from 1440 AD to 1518 AD. Encyclopaedia Britannica simply states that Kabir lived in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Vol.13 p.235) In the most authentic and popular Hindi treatise we find Kabir’s date of death recorded as follows: “He died in Samat 1505 at Maghar”<sup>209</sup> which corresponds to 1448 AD. According to archaeological survey of India Nawab Bijli Khan erected Kabir’s mausoleum two years after his death and wrote his year of death on it, which was 1448 AD. Later Nawab Fidai Khan had the mausoleum repaired in 1667 AD but retained the date of birth which can still be seen there. Guru Nanak was born in 1469 AD 21 years after Kabir’s death. Neither any later Sikh Guru nor any follower of Kabir has anywhere mentioned that Kabir was the Guru of Guru Nanak or that they had met each other.

<sup>206</sup> In this game even Kabir Panthis joined in. They violated the *Janam Sakhis* because Guru Nanak’s fame was clouding that of Kabir. Hindalis too introduced unsubstantiated stories in the *Janam Sakhis* and according to Nanak Parkash and Giani Gian Singh tore up and destroyed the original *Janam Sakhi*.

<sup>207</sup> ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਪੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਸੁ ਭਲਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਪੰਚਹੁ ਓਨਿ ਲਾਹਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਸਭੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੪) OR “ਜਿਨਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਪਿਆ ਆਪਣਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਠਉਰ ਨ ਠਾਉ ॥ ਹਲਤੁ ਪਲਤੁ ਦੇਵੈ ਗਏ ਦਰਗਹ ਨਾਹੀ ਥਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੪). ਜਿਨਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਪਿਆ ਆਪਣਾ ਤੇ ਨਰ ਬੁਰਿਆਰੀ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਨਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਪਾਪਿਸਟ ਹਤਿਆਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੧)

<sup>208</sup> According to Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha Kabir was born in 1398 AD (Mahan Kosh P.298)

<sup>209</sup> “ਸਮਤ ਪੰਦਰਹ ਸੋ ਔਰ ਪਾਂਚ ਭੋ ਮਗਹਰ ਕੀਓ ਗਵਨ” (“ਹਿੰਦੀ ਕਾਵਯ ਮੋਂ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸੰਪਰਦਾ” ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੬) Exactly the same date is recorded in “ਉਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਕੀ ਸੰਤ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭).

It is significant to note that while mentioning the name of Kabir, the Sikh Gurus have shown no special respect other than that accorded to all other Bhagats. The third Guru Amar Das was only 10 years younger than Guru Nanak, he must have known and mentioned Kabir if Kabir had the slightest connection with Guru Nanak. Even Guru Angad (the second Guru) has not mentioned Kabir. Guru Arjan Dev, the compiler of Guru Granth Sahib, mentions the name of Kabir only as a Bhagat (*Sant*) but glorifies Guru Nanak as “the embodiment of God.”<sup>210</sup> The situation would have been the reverse if Kabir were the Guru and Nanak his follower.

In his magnum opus the *Vars*, Bhai Gurdas has mentioned Kabir three times only as a Bhagat (*saint*) and has shown no connection between Guru Nanak and Kabir. Baba Buddha lived a long time after Guru Nanak and yet did not ask Bhai Gurdas to show reverence to Guru Nanak’s presumed Guru.

Kabir is mistakenly suggested by some as Guru of Guru Nanak because of some similarities in their diction, imagery and train of thought in Bani, and rejection of caste system, idolatory and formalism by both. In this attempt it is completely ignored that Kabir accepted Vedic authority where as Guru Nanak did not.<sup>211</sup> While addressing the Brahmans Kabir’s language becomes a bit harsh and vitriolic<sup>212</sup> whereas the Guru is restrained and scholarly. One is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the two had not much in common. Many others also share the apparently common points between Kabir and Guru Nanak. For example Buddhism, Christianity and Islam did not observe caste and Gorakh and Ramanand both criticised Brahmanical over lordship. It is also worth noting that Kabir did not take any interest in the temporal affairs of his time like Guru Nanak nor did he preach his gospel throughout the length and breadth of India as did Guru Nanak.

<sup>210</sup> “ਕਬੀਰਿ ਧਿਆਇਓ ਏਕ ਰੰਗ ,ਨਾਮਦੇਵ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਬਸਹਿ ਸੰਗਿ॥ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਧਿਆਏ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਅਨੂਪ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਰੂਪ”(ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੯੨) ॥ “ਨਾਮਾ ਛੀਬਾ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੁਲਾਹਾ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੇ ਬੇਤੇ ਸਬਦ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਪੰਨਾ੬੭) ॥“ਕਲਜੁਗਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਉਧਰੇ, ਨਾਮਾ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਸਭਿ ਦੇਖ ਗਏ ਚਮਰੇ” (ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੯੫) ॥“ਸਾਧੂ ਸਰਣਿ ਪਰੈ ਸੋ ਉਬਰੈ ਖੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਸੁਦੁ ਚੰਡਾਲ ਚੰਡਈਆ, ਨਾਮਾ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਕਬੀਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਅਉਜਾਤਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਚਮਿਆਰੁ ਚੰਮਈਆ (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩੫)

<sup>211</sup> “In one respect Nanak surpassed Kabir and every other reformer who continued to pay homage to Rama and Krishna as divine beings whereas Nanak boldly questioned their divinity.” (Dr. Gokal Chand Narang)

<sup>212</sup> ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣੀ ਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਤਉ ਆਨ ਬਾਟ ਕਾਹੇ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੨੪)

## 6.4 Ramanand / Sant Rein

Recently, some writers have made ridiculous assertions by calling Ramanand as the Guru of Guru Nanak. Ramanand (Kabir's Guru) lived much earlier. Some others try to prove that *Sant Rein* was Guru Nanak's Guru. *Sant Rein* lived nearly 180 years after Guru Nanak.<sup>213</sup> Picking out a few similarities between Sikhism and Christianity, some western writers have gone to the extent of claiming that Guru Nanak based Sikhism on Christianity.<sup>214</sup> Such claims are outrightly ridiculous and have no basis at all.

It is not only the non-Sikh writers that make mistakes; sometimes, Sikh writers have committed similar blunders. For example resenting the misinterpretations of Guru Nanak's writings, Nihal Singh Suri (in his book "*Jiwan birtant Sri Kabir ji-Lahore 1917*") writes that Ravidas, Ramanand, Pipa, and Kabir were all followers of Guru Nanak. The author of Mehma Parkash writes that Gorakh (who lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century) came to meet Guru Nanak (15<sup>th</sup> century).

## 6.5 Conclusion

The question of Guru Nanak's guruship is answered by Bhai Gurdas as follows:

"The Baba first identified the source of grace and later toiled hard to achieve it. He attained topmost spiritual height and began showering humility and spiritualism everywhere."<sup>215</sup>

In his treatise "*Living religions and modern thought*" Mr. Widgery writes, "*Nanak probably gained from his undisturbed communings with nature, his own soul and his Creator*" (Page 97). Rabindra Nath Tagore wrote, "*The truth which filled his mind was not a thing which he borrowed from*

---

<sup>213</sup> Some writers have written that Sant Rein was the leader of the group of Sants whom Guru Nanak had fed at Chuhar Kana and that he was the Guru of Guru Nanak. They quote, ਨਾਨਕ ਰੋਣ ਸੰਤ ਚਰਨਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੬) ਨਾਨਕ ਰੋਣ ਸੰਤ ਜਨ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੮)॥ These lines are taken out of context and have no relation with any living personality. In this connection Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha writes, "ਕਿਤਨੇ ਅੰਞਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਚਲਾਕ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ (ਸੰਤ ਰੋਣ ਨੂੰ) ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੁਖਵਾਕ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ 'ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ (ਸੋਰਠ ਮ:੧)।

Another Sant Rein is supposed to have lived nearly 180 years after Guru Nanak

<sup>214</sup> Read "Sikh Religion and Christianity" by G.S.Sidhu

<sup>215</sup> "ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਬਾਬੇ ਪਾਇਆ ਬਖਸ਼ ਦਰ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਦੇ ਫਿਰ ਘਾਲ ਕਮਾਈ, ਬਾਬਾ ਪੈਧਾ ਸਚ ਖੰਡ ਨਉ ਨਿਧ ਨਾਮ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਪਾਈ"॥

*books or received from teachers; he did not come to it by following a prescribed path of tradition, but it came to him as an illumination of his entire life, almost like a communication of his universal self to his personal self.”*

The best source of information on this issue is Guru Nanak himself. He writes, “The essence, the immaculate Lord, the Light of all has imbedded His light in me. There remains no secret between us. The Infinite Transcendent Lord, the Supreme Lord God has met Nanak as the Guru”<sup>216</sup>

The Siddhas directly asked Guru Nanak) “Whose follower are you and who is your Guru”? The Guru replied, ‘Primal Word’ is my Guru and my concentration on ‘word’ (Shabad) has been my guide.<sup>217</sup>

If Guru Nanak had any Human Guru, he would surely have named him in response to this direct question.

Ms Dorothy Field writes, “In India it has at all times been the custom for young men to be apprenticed to a Guru as religious guide. Every great saint had his Guru. But Nanak held that the religious world had gone astray and that therefore a new and direct revelation was again necessary. He therefore declared that his own Guru was God who had specially instructed him how to lead back the world to the right path.”

---

<sup>216</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੯) ਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੋਟਿਓ, ਸਾਚੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਨਿਬੇਰਾ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭) ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਏਕਾ ਵਰਤੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਭਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੩) \_

<sup>217</sup> “ਕਵਣ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂੰ ਚੇਲਾ ?” “ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩)॥ ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ਬਿਨ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗ ਬਉਰਾਨੰ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗਜਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੧੫) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੈ ਸਬਦ ਸਬਦ ਮੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ (ਭ:ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਕਬਿਤ ਪੜ੪)

## Chapter Seven

### Is Granth Sahib a Guru?

McLeod and some other Christian Missionaries have raised the issue that Guru Granth Sahib was at no stage invested with Guruship.<sup>218</sup>

In his book, *“The Evolution of Sikh Community”*, McLeod remarked that, *“There is the question of authority within the evolving Khalsa. Tradition attributes a definitive answer to Guru Gobind Singh, one which conferred his personal authority upon the sacred scripture and the corporate Panth. This may perhaps be a retrospective interpretation, a tradition which owes its origin not to an actual pronouncement of the Guru but to an instant need for maintaining the Panth’s cohesion during a late period.”* The Sikhs, however, believe that before his death at Nander on October 7, 1708 Guru Gobind Singh ended the personal Guruship and instructed his followers to consider the Granth Sahib as their spiritual Guru.<sup>219</sup> He also said that all temporal matters needing direction should be referred to an assembly of five baptised Sikhs. This was the wisest decision of the Guru<sup>220</sup> and was in accordance with the principles enunciated by Guru Nanak. Right from the beginning of the Sikh movement the “Word” was considered as the spiritual Guru. Sooner or later the “Word” had to be established as such. Guru Gobind Singh therefore made the word-Guru everlasting by declaring it as the spiritual representative of the ten Sikh Gurus thereby lending it the authority of the ten spiritual preceptors.

---

<sup>218</sup> Pashaura Singh, Piar Singh and Harjot Oberoi also support this view.

<sup>219</sup> This is because spiritual reality is more important than sensually perceived empirical reality. It is believed that Ahmad Shah Abdali had carried away the original copy of the Granth during a battle fought with the Sikhs near village Kothala. However some scholars believe that the original Granth is still available in the seminary of *Sant Rein Udasi* in village Kothala (District Maler Kotla).

<sup>220</sup> Usually when a great man or a Guru dies, there crops up a struggle between his disciples to occupy his place. Bestowal of Guruship on the ‘Word’ was therefore a very wise step to avoid conflict. If the Guru had not done so the Nirmlay, Udasi, Bedi, Nirankari, Sodhi, Bhallay and Trehan etc would have caused wars of succession like Prithi Chand, Ram Rai and Sheehan.

## 7.1 The proofs

Unfortunately there were no trained historians among the Guru's followers to record all that happened at the time of his death. It is also true that the Guru himself has not left any written evidence to that end (or perhaps he did not want to) but there are numerous written proofs left by his contemporaries or near contemporaries to authenticate the bestowal of Guruship on the Holy Granth. Narbad Bhatt, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, wrote in his diary that just before the Guru's death, the Guru asked Bhai Dya Singh to fetch the Holy Granth. With reverence the Guru appointed the Granth as the next and the final Guru of the Sikhs.<sup>221</sup>

Bhai Prahlad Singh was the childhood companion of Guru Gobind Singh. In his *Rehat Nama* he writes, "All Sikhs were ordered to consider the Granth as their Guru".<sup>222</sup> Bhai Nand Lal, a companion of Guru Gobind Singh, writes in his *Rehat Nama* that when the Guru was asked about his successor, he replied that after his death he would exist in three forms (a) *Nirgun* (invisible) (b) *Shabad* (Word) and (c) *Sargun* (visible) in Khalsa. He is then said to have bowed to the Granth and ceremoniously passed on the Guruship to the Granth. He changed its name from *Pothi Sahib* to *Guru Granth Sahib* and said that henceforth whoever wished to seek guidance, enlightenment, or solace should reverently read the *Guru Granth Sahib*.<sup>223</sup> Another contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh was Bhai Chaupa Singh. In his *Rehat Nama* he also records that Guru Gobind Singh designated the Granth as the Guru.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>221</sup> "ਸਰਬਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਸੋ ਕਹਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਗਾਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਕੋ ਜਾਨਣਾ ॥ ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਜਾਣੇਗਾ ਉਸ ਕੀ ਘਾਲ ਥਾਇ ਪਵੇਗੀ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਹੁੜੀ ਕਰੇਗਾ ॥ ਸਤ ਕਰ ਮੰਨਣਾ" ॥

<sup>222</sup> ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ ॥ ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਪਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ, ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਮੇ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਇਨਹੋ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹਿ (ਭਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਅੰਕ ੨੬)

<sup>223</sup> ਤੀਨ ਰੂਪ ਮੋਹਿਨਾ ਸੁਣੋ ਨੰਦ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਇ, ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਗੁਰਸਬਦ ਕਹੋ ਤੋਹਿ ਸਮਝਾਇ॥ ਏਕ ਰੂਪ ਤਿਹ ਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਪਰੇ ॥ ਦੂਸਰ ਰੂਪ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਾਣ, ਇਸ ਮੈ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਛੁ ਮਾਨ ॥ ਤੀਸਰ ਰੂਪ ਸਿਖ ਹੈ ਮੁਹਿ ॥ ਜੋ ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਨ ਕੀ ਚਾਹ, ਦਰਸਨ ਕਰੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਆ ॥ ਜੋ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਥ ਚਾਹੇ ਕਰ ਬਾਤ, ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਵਿਚਾਰੇ ਸਾਥ॥ ਜੋ ਮੁਝ ਬਚਨ ਸੁਨਨ ਕੀ ਚਾਏ, ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਸੁਣੇ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਏ ॥ ਮੇਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਾਨ, ਇਸ ਮੈਂ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਛੁ ਮਾਨ ॥ (ਰਹਿਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) "ਦਰ ਸੁਖਨ ਪਿਨਹਾਂ ਸੁਦਮ ਮਾਨਿੰਦਿ ਬੂ ਦਰ ਬਰਗਿ ਗੁਲ, ਹਰਿ ਕਿ ਦੀਦਨ ਮੈਲ ਦਾਰਦ ਦਰ ਸੁਖਨ ਬੀਨਦ ਮਰਾ (I am in the word as the fragrance is in a flower. Those who wish to see me can find me in the word)

<sup>224</sup> ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ॥ ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਚੌਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ)



Bhatt Vahi (of Talaunda Pargna Jind)<sup>225</sup> mentions that the Guru placed five *paisas* and a coconut in front of the Granth Sahib and said, “it is my command that all should accept Sri Granth ji as their Guru in my place.”<sup>226</sup>

A letter written by Mata Sundri Ji (wife of Guru Gobind Singh) reminds the Sikhs to accept only Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru and not Ajit Singh or Banda Bahadur.<sup>227</sup>

Another earliest reference to appointing Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru is found in *Gur Sobha Granth by Sainapat*<sup>228</sup> written in 1711 AD (3 years after the Guru's death). In it we find that a day before his death Guru Gobind Singh, in answering a question from one of his followers, said, “I have bestowed my physical form of Guruship upon the Khalsa”<sup>229</sup>. When the Sikhs enquired as to his spiritual form, the Guru is reported to have said, “The limitless everlasting ‘Word’ will remain the True spiritual Guru”.<sup>230</sup>

In Gurbilas Patshahi Chheveen (written by Kavi Sohan from May 1717 to 22 July 1718 AD (only eight and half years after Guru Gobind Singh's death) the Granth is clearly mentioned as “Guru Granth”. It reads, “Consider the Granth the same as the Guru. Do not even think of distinguishing between Granth and the Guru”.<sup>231</sup> Koer Singh (1751 AD) and Kesar Singh Chhibber (1769 AD) again mentioned this fact<sup>232</sup> in the later part of eighteenth century.

<sup>225</sup> This Vahi (record book) has been researched by Giani Garja Singh

<sup>226</sup> Further information on this topic is available in “**Guru Granth Sahib, its Physics and metaphysics**” written by Gurninder Kaur.

<sup>227</sup> This letter is now in village Bhai Rupa

<sup>228</sup> Sainapat was the court poet of Guru Gobind Singh.

<sup>229</sup> ਤਾਂਹਿ ਸਮੇਂ ਗੁਰ ਬੈਨ ਸੁਨਾਇਓ । ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਪਨ ਰੂਪ ਬਤਾਇਓ ॥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੀ ਸੋ ਹੈ ਮਮ ਕਾਮਾ ॥ ਬਖਸ਼ ਦੀਓ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਕਉ ਜਾਮਾ ॥ ( ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਸੋਭਾ ੮੦੬ )

<sup>230</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਹਮਰਾ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ , ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ਅਜਰ ਜਰੰ ॥ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰਿ ਧਿਆਨੀ ਉਚਰੀ ਬਾਨੀ ਪਦ ਨਿਰਬਾਨੀ ਅਪਰ ਪਰੰ ॥ (ਗੁਰ ਸੋਭਾ ੮੮੦)

<sup>231</sup> ਮਮ ਆਗਿਆਂ ਸਬ ਹੀ ਸੁਨੇ ਸਤਿ ਬਾਤ ਨਿਰਧਾਰ । ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਭੇਦ ਨਾ ਕੋਊ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥ (੪੦੯) ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਲਜੁਗ ਭਯੋ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰੂਪ ਸਮਾਨ । ਦਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਰੂਪ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਾਨ ॥ (੪੧੨) ਗੁਰੂ ਦਰਸ ਜਿਹ ਦੇਖਨਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦਰਸਾਇ ॥ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਨਿ ਗੁਰ ਸੋ ਚਹੈ, ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮਨ ਲਾਇ (੪੧੩)

<sup>232</sup> Koer Singh says that Khalsa was left under the protection of ਅਸਕੇਤੂ (Sword bearer=Khalsa) and that ਆਦਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ (The Granth) was the Guru after him. ਤਾਂ ਤੋ ਜੋ ਮੁਹਿ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਜਾਨਾ, ਮਾਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਭਗਵਾਨਾ ॥ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਗੁਰੂ ਮੋਹ ਨਿਰਚਾ ਧਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਬਿਨ ਚਾਹ ਨਾ ਧਰੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੩) Chhibber says, “ਗਰੀਬ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਹੈ ਤੇਰੀ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਹਵਾਲ ॥ ਬਚਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਲੜ ਪਕੜੋ ਅਕਾਲ ॥ ”(ਚਰਨ ੧੦/੬੫੦) ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ॥ ਗੋਦੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇਵੀ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਪਾਏ, ਭਜਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ “ (੬੫੧) “ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਗੱਦੀ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਦੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਗਿਆ ॥ ਅਜ ਪ੍ਰਤਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਹੈ । ਸੋਈ ਗਿਆ ਜੋ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੋਂ ਗਿਆ ” (੨੨੦) ਜੋ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੋਂ ਮੁੜੇ ਸੋਈ

Similarly Ghulam Mahyudin says that the Guru's last words were, "There is no difference between the Guru and the 'Word' of the Granth." Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, J.D.Cunningham, Syed Muhammad Latif and M.A. Macauliffe all mention the same thing. Ghanaya Lal in his book 'Tarikh-e-Punjab' also confirms this.<sup>233</sup>

Sarup Das Bhalla (1774AD) also writes that "Guru Granth Sahib" was recognised as the Guru.<sup>234</sup> *Umdat-ut-Twarikh* (written during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Sohan Lal Suri) also confirms that *Granthji* was bestowed with Guruship. "The godman then said that the Granth will be the Guru".<sup>235</sup>

Although some source material had admittedly been corrupted but the statements about bestowal of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib made by the contemporary and near contemporary writers are so numerous that they cannot be easily brushed aside as a coincidence.

The Guru is believed to be mystically present in the Guru Granth Sahib (Word) and symbolically in the corporate body of the Khalsa. The first being the permanent spiritual Guru and the latter a collective and developing worldly Guru (Guide).

## 7.2 Akhand Paath

A continuous reading of the Granth Sahib is called *Akhand Paath*. The reading stops only after reading all 1430 pages. Usually it takes 48 hours. The word *Akhand paath* is nowhere mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib and neither is there any evidence of any *Akhand Paath* having been organised by any of our Gurus.<sup>236</sup> Guru Gobind Singh completed the Holy Granth in 1705 AD and *Akhand Paath* could start only after this event but we find no instructions for conducting *Akhand Paath*.

---

ਰੁੜ੍ਹੇ (੨੬੭)

<sup>233</sup> "ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਆਖਰੀ ਵਕਤ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੇ ਆਗੇ ਪਾਂਚ ਪੈਸੇ ਅਉਰ ਸਿਰੀ ਫਲ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਕਾ ਰਖਾ" (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬)

<sup>234</sup> . ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀਨ ਦਿਆਲ ਬਚਨ ਕੀਆ ਜੋ ਦਸ ਸਰੂਪ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਭਏ, ਅਬ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਹਗਾ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੋ ਜਾਨਨਾ॥  
ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਸੇ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਹੋਇ ਤੋ ਆਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨਾ, ਮੇਰੇ ਸੇ ਬਾਤਾ ਹੋਵੈਗੀ ॥" (ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੨-੮੯੩)॥

<sup>235</sup> ਇਨਕਸ਼ਾਦ ਜਲਵਾ ਈਯਾਦ ਯਾਫਤ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਅਸਤ" (ਉਮਦਾਤੁ ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫)

<sup>236</sup> Bhai Santokh Singh in his *Gur Partap Suraj* writes that Holy Granth was read for 13 days by Baba Buddha Ji at the death of Guru Arjan Dev. "ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਵਾਇਵ, ਭਾਈ ਬੁਧ ਪਠਨ ਕੋ ਲਾਇਵ ॥..... ਤ੍ਰੋਦਸ ਦਿਨ ਇਸ ਬਿਧ ਜਬ ਭਯੋ, ਪਢਯੋ ਸੁ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਅੰਤ ਲੋ ਅਯੋ (ਰਾਸ ੪ ਅਧਿਆਏ ੪੫)

It is assumed that the *Akhand Paath* started sometime after Baba Banda Singh's death when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded everywhere (This period lasted roughly from 1716 to 1770 AD). In times of acute difficulty and danger their only hope lay in spiritual support. Historians believe that presumably the Buddha Dal started the reading of the Granth.<sup>237</sup> The reading was always planned to end in the shortest time to avoid being attacked unexpectedly. Later when the Sikh religious places were occupied and controlled by the Hindus or the Hindu converts to Sikhism they introduced many rituals that go with *Akhand Paath* and contradict the teachings of the Granth.<sup>238</sup> Although Giani Gian Singh writes in his *Panth Parkash* that Jassa Singh Ahluwalia organised an *Akhand Paath* in Harmander Sahib after defeating Ahmad Shah Abdali and reconstructing the shrine, the first *Akhand Paath* is said to have been organised only in 1909 AD by the Nirankari Sikhs.

These days *Akhand Paaths* have become a big business. Our so-called *Sants* organise hundreds of *Akhand Paaths* at one and the same time and there are seldom any people to listen and benefit from them. Even otherwise the speed at which the *Bani* is read during an *Akhand Paath* is such that even the most alert and mentally astute person cannot comprehend anything. Every effort is made to finish the reading within a stipulated period. This is sheer waste of time. The Guru has called such practices a mere show and superstition. He says, "God cannot be understood simply by reading scriptures; the deceitful pretenders are deluded by doubt".<sup>239</sup>

<sup>237</sup> ਪਾਠ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਰੀਤ ਪੰਥ ਵਿਚ ਬੁੱਢੇ ਦਲ ਨੇ ਚਲਾਈ ਹੈ । ਸਤਿਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ ॥ ਬਹੁਤ ਲੋਕ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤ ਅਖੰਡ ਦੀਵਾ ਮਚਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਲ ਦਾ ਘੜਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਰਿਏਅਲ ਆਦਿਕ ਰਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਆਰੰਭਕਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੱਲੀ (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ ਫਾਂਸੀ ੪੦)

<sup>238</sup> ਕੁੰਭ ਜਲ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਲਈ, ਧੂਪ ਹਵਨ ਲਈ ਜੋ ਪੌਣ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਹੈ, ਘੜੇ ਬੱਲੇ ਅਨਾਜ ਅੰਨ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਲਈ, ਅਤੇ ਜੋਤ ਅਗਨੀ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਰਖੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ । ਨਾਰੀਅਲ ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੋੜਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਇਹ ਰਸਮਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅੱਜ ਤੱਕ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਵਿਵਰਜਿਤ ਹੈ। "ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਭੋਲਹਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੨) ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਪੂਜੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਕਿਆ ਮਾਗਉ ਕਿਆ ਦੇਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭) ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਹੈ ਮਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯) ਦੇਵੀਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨੈ ਮਰਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪). ਇਹ ਸਭ ਮਨਮਤ ਹੈ । ਕੁਝ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਨਿਰਮਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਰੰਭ ਕੀਤੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਰੀਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਾਤ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ । ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਖਾਤੇ ਹਰਦਵਾਰ, ਗਯਾ, ਬਨਾਰਸ ਪ੍ਰਾਗਰਾਜ ਆਦਿਕ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਥੇ ਇਹ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਾਗ੍ਰਤੀਆਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ । ।

<sup>239</sup> ਪਾਠ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਨਾ ਬੂਝਈ ਭੇਖੀ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬) ਪਾਠ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਨਹੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੫) ਪਾਠ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਤੇ ਲੋਕ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦੫) ਪੜ੍ਹੀਐ ਨਾਹੀ ਭੇਦੁ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਪਾਵਣਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੮) ਪੜ੍ਹੀਐ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਫੁਹੁ ਗਿਆਨੀਆ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਿ ਆਵੈ ਤਾ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਬਕੇ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਸਕੀ ਧੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯) ਗਾਏ ਸੁਣੇ ਆਖੇ ਮੀਚੈ ਪਾਈਐ ਨ ਪਰਮ ਪਦ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਗਹਿ ਜਉ ਲਉ ਨ ਕਮਾਈਐ ( ਭ: ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਕਬਤਿ ੪੩੯)

Learning undigested by thought is labour lost (Confucious)

The Guru calls such pretenders fools.<sup>240</sup> The gullible Devotees are being deluded and cheated by the fraudsters in broad daylight. These *Sants* and *Granthis* then also proclaim the airy-fairy merit of the *Akhand Paath*, which no one has so far quantified and no one asks them to explain it.

The Sikh Rehat Maryada says, “Any person who asks for or arranges *Akhand Paath* should, as far as possible ensure that the reading is done by himself, his family or friends. If, for any reason, such a person is unable to get such help in the reading, he should at least listen to as much of the reading as possible. It is wrong for people to arrange for *Akhand Paath* without their being prepared to either read or listen to it.” (Sikh Rehat Maryada SGPC Amritsar English edition 1978 page 10)<sup>241</sup>

### 7.3 Merit (ਮਹਾਤਮ) of Akhand paath.

There is not a word about *Akhand Paath* or its merit (ਮਹਾਤਮ) in the Holy Granth. Ask the *Granthis* and *Sants* to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of this merit (ਮਹਾਤਮ)?
2. Is it received in this world or the next? If in this world in what form? Cash or kind and how much for one *Akhand Paath*? If in the next world how certain can we be of receiving it?
3. Who receives it? The person who pays for *Akhand Paath*, the person/persons who read the Granth, the person/persons who cook and serve, the person/persons (if any) who hear the *Paath*? Is it equally distributed among all of them?
4. If two persons fight and injure each other seriously but both organise *Akhand Paaths* and pray for victory in the court, who wins?

<sup>240</sup> ਮੂਰਖ ਪੜ੍ਹਹਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਬੂਝਹਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਿਰਲੈ ਜਾਤਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੩) ਮੂਰਖ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਪੜ੍ਹਹਿ ਮੂਲੁ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੩) ਮੂਰਖਿ ਪੜ੍ਹਿ ਪੜ੍ਹਿ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੪) ਮੂਰਖੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨਈ ਸੁਝ ਬੂਝ ਨਹ ਕਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੮)

<sup>241</sup> A 101-member committee of the so-called *Sants* issued a fake Rehat Maryada on 30 May 1998. In it they suggest so many anti-Gurmat rituals. For example the “Shabad” Guru is said to feel heat and cold and must be supplied warm clothes in winter and a fan in summer. The Shabad Guru must be offered food at certain times of the day. Ironically they never give the Guru a bath.

5. If a rich man pays for a continuous *Akhand Paath* from his ill-gotten wealth, how much would be the merit? Would he deserve a place in heaven?<sup>242</sup> If a poor person has no wherewithal to have an *Akhand Paath* done but lives a very pious and virtuous life, would he go without any merit?
6. Would we derive the same amount of merit if the *Akhand Paath* were done from a recorded tape or on the Radio? If not why?
7. Although *Granthis* always give themselves a certificate by saying *Paath ended without a error*” (ਪਾਠ ਨਿਰਵਿਘਨ ਸਮਾਪਤ ਹੋਇਆ). What if the *Paathis* unwittingly made mistakes in reading the *Granth*? Would they be punished? Would the amount of merit be reduced and if so by what formula and who suffers the loss? The reader or the paymaster?
8. Muslims, Jews, and Christians do not do *Akhand Paaths*. Would they all go without merit? Is hell reserved for them?

If you ask somebody why the *Akhand Paath* is being organised, the most likely answer would be “to have the house sanctified” (ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ). One wonders whether the *Paath* will sanctify only one room, two rooms, the whole house or the whole street? Is sanctifying power of the *Granth* limited to that particular house or room? Why is the whole world not considered sanctified because the Holy *Granth* is in the world? Can a public bar or a brothel be sanctified if an *Akhand Paath* is done there?<sup>243</sup> The Sikhs believe that God resides everywhere, then why is any house not considered sanctified without Guru *Granth Sahib*’s presence?<sup>244</sup> The fact is that the house (our mind), which needs to be sanctified, remains unsanctified even after the *Akhand paath*.

<sup>242</sup> ਕੰਚਨ ਵੰਨੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਕਲਵਤਿ ਚੀਰਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੮੮) ਕੰਚਨ ਸਿਉ ਪਾਈਐ ਨਹੀ ਤੋਲਿ ॥ ਮਨ ਦੇ ਰਾਮ ਲੀਆ ਹੈ ਮੋਲ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੨੭) ਮਾਇਆ ਮਗਨੁ ਨਰਕਿ ਲੈ ਜਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯੬) ਮਾਇਆ ਮੂਠਾ ਸਦਾ ਬਿਲਲਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭੬) ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਤੇ ਕਤਿ ਪਚਿਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੪੦)

<sup>243</sup> This question was sent to me by a young London Sikh when some people took Guru *Granth Sahib* into a public bar at Slough (England)

<sup>244</sup> ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੩) ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਵਾੜੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮਾਲੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੮)

The Gurus have instructed the Sikhs to read the *Granth*, understand the meanings and to act upon the instructions.<sup>245</sup> Mechanical reading carries no value and no number of *Akhand Paaths*, *Sampat Paaths* or *Silent Paaths* can compel God to change His laws. Bhai Gurdas says, “Even if you go on saying “sugar” throughout the day, no sweetness is felt by the tongue unless you actually eat sugar.”<sup>246</sup>

The merit of reading *Gurbani* accrues only when one understands the Guru’s message, internalises it and moulds his life style accordingly. This is possible only when one reads the Guru’s *Bani* (or hears it read) attentively.<sup>247</sup> Those who expect to receive any spiritual merit of the *Akhand Paath* in the next world must note what the Guru says about it, “*The hands of the go-between are cut off; this is the Lord’s justice. O Nanak, in the world hereafter, that alone is received, which one gives to the needy from his own earnings and labour*”.<sup>248</sup>

<sup>245</sup> ਗਾਵੀਐ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਮਨ ਰਖੀਐ ਭਾਉ (ਜਪੁਜੀ)॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਜਨਮ ਸਕਾਰਥਾ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਿ ਸਮਝਿ ਸੁਣੇਹੀ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੧/੩) ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ਮਾਰੈ ਤਰੈ ਤਾਰੇ ਉਲਟਿ ਜੋਨਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮) ਸਬਸੈ ਉਪਰ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੦) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਚਨ ਕਮਾਵਣੇ ਸਚਾ ਇਹੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨) “ਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਕ ਜਿਨ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹ ਕਰ ਮਾਨੇ,ਸੋ ਮਮ ਪਯਾਰੋ ਸਿਖ ਮਹਾਨੇ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਸਰੂਪ ਚਿਦੇ ਮੇ ਧਾਰੇ, ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕੇ ਰਿਦੈ ਬਿਚਾਰੇ॥ ਪਰਯੋ ਅਰਥ ਜੋ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਮਝਾਰਾ ਬਾਰ ਬਾਰ ਉਰ ਕਰਹੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਾ” (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰਾਸੀ ੧ /੬੪) “ਵਿਚਾਰਨਾ” ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੇ ਧਾਤੂ “ਵਿਚਰ” ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਹੈ ਅਮਲ ਕਰਨਾ ਜਾਂ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਕਰਨਾ । ਸੋ ਵਿਚਾਰਵਾਨ ਉਹੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਅਮਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ । ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਾਲ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਉਣਾ ਹੈ ਰਟਨ ਤਾਂ ਟੋਪ ਰੀਕਾਰਡਰ ਬੰਦੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵਧੀਆ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ।

<sup>246</sup> ਜੈਸੇ ਖਾਂਡ ਖਾਂਡ ਕਹੈ ਮੁਖਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੀਠਾ ਹੋਇ,ਜਬ ਲਗ ਜੀਭ ਸਾਦਿ ਖਾਂਡ ਨਹੀ ਖਾਈਐ ॥ (ਕਬਿਤ ੫੪੨)

<sup>247</sup> ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖ ਪੂਜਣ ਸਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਉਤਮ ਬਾਨੀ ॥ ਗਾਵਿਆ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਹਰਿ ਥਾਇ ਪਾਵੈ ਜਿਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰ ਮਾਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੯) ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਸੁਣਿ ਕੈ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਹਉ ਤਿਨਾ ਵਿਟਹੁ ਕੁਰਬਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੦) ਜਹ ਕਰਣੀ ਤਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਮਤਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫)ਹਮ ਸੋ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਕੋ ਚਾਹਹਿ, ਪੜਹਿ ਸੁਨਹਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਉਮਾਹਿ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਮਹਿ ਕਹਯੋ ਜੋ ਕਰੈ ਕਮਾਵਨ , ਚਾਰ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਲੈ ਮਨ ਭਾਵਨ ॥

<sup>248</sup> ਵਚੀਅਹਿ ਹਥ ਦਲਾਲ ਕੇ ਮੁਸਫੀ ਏਹ ਕਰੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੈ ਸੋ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿ ਖਟੇ ਘਾਲੇ ਦੇਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨)

## Chapter Eight

### The Living Guru

**G**uru Arjan Dev first edited the Adi Granth in 1604 AD. At that time it contained only the hymns written by the first five Sikh Gurus as well as fifteen Hindu and Muslim Bhagats (votaries of God). Most of these Bhagats belonged to the so-called depressed or untouchable classes. The main criterion for including their hymns in the Granth was the stage of their spiritual development and their philosophy of life. A Sikh named Bhai Banno prepared a second copy of the Granth. Bhai Banno's copy of the Holy Granth is said to have been termed brackish (*ਖਾਰੀ*) by Guru Arjan Dev because it contained some spurious hymns, which the Guru did not approve.<sup>249</sup> Guru Gobind Singh later edited the Granth once again at Damdama Sahib in 1705 AD and included the hymns written by the Ninth Guru but he intentionally did not include any of his own hymns in it. The Granth was now complete.

Some people call the Sikh scripture a living Guru of the Sikhs. Some of them even use electric fans in the Guru's room in summer and provide blankets in winter. Their devotion and love for the Guru is exemplary and deserves appreciation. However there are certain issues that cannot be resolved through intense devotion only.

---

<sup>249</sup> The Guru clearly said, "Anybody copying the Banno rescension must have it checked thoroughly. If copied from Gurdas rescension then it will be automatically correct." ਜੇਹੂੰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਇਸ ਥੋਂ ਲਿਖੈ, ਸੇਧਰਿ ਇਸੈ ਬਨਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਬੀੜ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਲਿਖੈ ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਸੇਹੂ ਸੁਧਾਇ ॥ Some historians state that it was called *Khari* because it had been prepared for use by the Sangat of village *KHARA*.

Did Guru Arjan Dev prepare the (human) body of a living Guru that feels hot and cold? If so were there were two living Gurus at the same time (Guru Arjan Dev and Pothis Sahib. Did one living Guru produce another living Guru?). Was there a third lesser Guru in Bhai Banno's version? Did Guru Gobind Singh create the same living Guru once again or was it a different living Guru? Which of the two was physically (biologically?) complete? Was *Pothi Sahib* (prepared by Guru Arjan Dev) only a half-born Guru? Can the same living Guru be created by two different people at two different times spanning one hundred years? Living objects are born. On which date was living Guru Granth Sahib born (1604 AD or 1705 AD)? Why did it take about two years for Bhai Gurdas<sup>250</sup> and Guru Arjan Dev to affect the birth of the living Guru? Living beings do not take that long when they are born. Living objects grow, feed, wash, defecate and eventually die. Can we say this for Guru Granth Sahib? Bhai Gurdas created the body of the Granth. Can we then say that Bhai Gurdas (the creator) was greater than Guru Granth Sahib (his creation)? How do we interpret the hymn, which reads, “*The Gurus, who are born to serve others, are neither born nor do they die.*”<sup>251</sup> What happens to the very old unserviceable copies of the Granth? Do we consider them as living and thus burn our living Gurus alive? These and many such questions demand answers.

The fact is that Guruship represented two important aspects of Sikhism: (1) The congregation and (2) The ‘Word’<sup>252</sup>. The living human Gurus provided the mystic unity between the two. It is for this reason that all gatherings were not called Sangat. A Sangat was only that congregation where Truth (God) was the object of veneration.<sup>253</sup>

Later when the Granth was established it began to be looked upon as the incorporated ‘Word’ (Shabad) of the living Guru. Guru Arjan Dev himself is said to have occupied a lower place than the Holy Scripture (primordial Word). The Granth began to be looked upon by the congregation as the

<sup>250</sup> Bhai Gurdas, son of Datar Chand (younger brother of Guru Amar Das), was the scribe who recorded the hymns in the first copy of the Granth. Some historians believe that he was the son of Ishar Das Bhalla (cousin of Guru Amar Das) and his mother was Mata Jivani. He lost both his parents at the age of 12 and was brought up by Guru Amar Das. Under the Guru's direction he learnt Sanskrit, Braj Bhasha, Persian, Urdu, and Punjabi and became a great scholar, philosopher and a poet.

<sup>251</sup> ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਹਰੁ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਨ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਆਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੯)

<sup>252</sup> (੧) ਵਿਚਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਬੁਝਹੁ ਸਬਦ ਵੀਰਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੧੪) (੨) (ਸਬਦੇ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਕੂਪਿ ਮੁਰਾਰੇ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੧੨)

<sup>253</sup> ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਕੈਸੀ ਜਾਣੀਐ॥ ਜਿਥੈ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੀਐ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨)



spiritual embodiment of the Guru and a treasure house of the mystical 'Word'. Even when Guru Arjan Dev was not physically present the congregation felt his presence and was mystically blessed by the Granth.

Later Guru Gobind Singh formally offered the spiritual leadership to the completed Granth and the temporal or congregational leadership to the *Panth* (Holy congregation). Thus the mystical 'Word' (Shabad) of the Guru in the Granth assumed the role of the *nirgun God* and the Panth represented the visible Guru-blessed organisation (Khalsa) standing for *Sargun* qualities of God.

Guruship of the Granth Sahib (the bearer of Spiritual 'Word') was a logical alternative to personal spiritual Guruship because a living human Guru could not be expected to live forever in a physical body.<sup>254</sup> The secular organisational and corporate political leadership of the congregation was accorded a second place and offered to the Khalsa (Guru Panth). Mr. Archer attaches far more importance to Guru Granth than to Guru Panth and says that the doctrine of the *Granth* being the Guru gave the Sikhs a unique importance.

Guru Gobind Singh's rescension of the Holy Granth (known as the Damdami rescension of the Granth) was printed and published in 1860 AD and is now recognised as the authentic Guru of the Sikhs. The centrality of the Guru Granth in a Gurdwara and in all Sikh ceremonies points to the fact that the Sikhs have great reverence for their Granth and their spiritual as well as temporal life is greatly influenced by its instruction. They believe that the divine spirit that beatified Guru Nanak and later enlightened the descendant Gurus now resides in the 'Word' (Shabad) of the Granth.<sup>255</sup> There is, therefore, nothing in a Sikh's life that does not revolve around Guru Granth Sahib. It serves as a magnet for the Sikh unity.<sup>256</sup> It should be noted that the living Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh were not worshipped in person like a statue and the same applies to Guru Granth Sahib<sup>257</sup>.

---

<sup>254</sup> ਜੋ ਆਇਆ ਸੇ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਜਾਸੀ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੭) ਜੋ ਆਇਆ ਸੇ ਚਲਸੀ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ਆਈ ਵਾਰੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੪)

<sup>255</sup> ਭਵਜਲੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੨) ਭਵਜਲੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਕਿਉ ਤਰੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੫)

<sup>256</sup> ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਕਉ ਹਰਿ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਤਿਨੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਗਲ ਮੰਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੦)

<sup>257</sup> It is for this reason that during the Guru-period (1469-1708 AD) the birth days and martyrdom days of the Gurus were not celebrated. After 1604 AD all importance began to be given to the Holy Scripture. So much so that Guru Arjan Dev always placed the *Pothi Sahib* higher and always sat in front as a humble servant. Performance of the Hindu "Arti" is an un-Sikh practice and was never performed by any Guru.

## 8.1 Living Guru

Let us now consider why the Guru Granth came to be called the Living Guru? The Sikh Gurus did not call the Granth living Guru at any time and neither did any historian or contemporary Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh. Giani Gian Singh wrote Panth Parkash in the year 1889 AD in which he copied a stanza from an earlier writing of a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh and changed it slightly.<sup>258</sup> He wrote ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੀ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ, ਸਬ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ, ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮੈਂ ਲੇਹ ॥

Most Sikhs do not accept that the Guru is material and yet recite the above stanza with gusto and consider the Granth as visible material body of the Guru (ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ). Little do they realize that this stanza does not match with Gurbani where it is stated umpteen times that Shabad is the Guru. A Shabad has no body (ਦੇਹ).

The original couplet was written by Bhai Prahlad Singh (Guru Gobind Singh's childhood friend). His couplet does make sense and is in line with the Guru's philosophy. He had written ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ ॥ ਸਬ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਬਚਨ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ॥ ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਮੇ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਇਨਹੋਂ ਮੇ ਲੇਹ ॥ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅੰਕ ੨੬)

Translation:- "Panth (a body of God-loving people) has been founded under directions from God. All Sikhs are bidden to consider Granth (Word=Shabad) as their spiritual (Nirgun) Guru. The manifest body of the Guru will now onwards be represented by Guru Khalsa (Committed God-orientated human beings). Any Sikh who wishes to seek me should find

<sup>258</sup> Note that this couplet was changed by Giani Gian Singh in 1880 AD to read "ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਪਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ, ਜਾਂ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹ" which does not agree with the philosophy of the Guru Granth Sahib like Prahlad Singh's original couplet did. Guru Khalsa is the visible body of the Guru and Guru Granth Sahib is the spiritual Guru (Shabad) NOT A BODY (ਦੇਹ). For the first 40 years of my life the second part of the couplet was read as "ਜਾਂ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਿਲੇਹ" In his Panth Parkash Rattan Singh Bhangu also accepted "ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹ"। The first version (ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧ ਹੈ) is closer to the Gurmat Philosophy. Everybody wants to meet God but only those with "ਸੁਧ ਹਿਰਦਾ" can hope to meet Him. ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਸਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੩੨) ਹਿਰਦੈ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਚਰਣ ਵਸਾਈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧੯)

me (physically living) among my Sikhs and (spiritually in) the Granth”.

The Guru of the Sikhs and indeed of the whole Universe is the “Word”(Shabad), which is eternal.”<sup>259</sup> The ‘Word’ (Shabad) is spiritual energy, which like physical energy, can change its form but is indestructible and invisible. Therefore the only appropriate adjective that suits the Sikh Sacred Scripture is not Living Guru (ਜੀਵਤ ਗੁਰੂ) but Eternal Guru Or Immortal Guru (ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਗੁਰੂ)<sup>260</sup>

## 8.2 The Holy Book

Another question is sometimes raised by some deeply devoted Sikhs. They do not like the Holy Granth Sahib to be called “The Holy Book”. Ironically they accept the *Gutkas, Panj Granthees and Sanchees* as sacred books but do not call them Smaller (or baby) Guru Granth Sahibs. They also accept quotations from the sacred Granth printed in various books and newspapers without questioning why their living Guru has been dismembered by printing a verse here and a hymn there. *Obviously* anything recorded on paper and then bound for posterity is a book whether it is big or small. Religious books have always been called *Pothi* or *Granth*.<sup>261</sup> For example five days before the death of Guru Nanak (2.9.1539 AD), the Guruship was passed to Guru Angad Dev. Puratan Janam Sakhi records this incident as follows:

ਤਿਤ ਮਹਲ ਜੋ ਸਬਦ ਹੋਆ ਸੋ ਪੋਥੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਜੋਗ ਮਿਲੀ (ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰਬਰ ੫੭)

“The hymns composed by the Guru until then were passed on to Guru Angad in the form of a *Pothi* (A book.)”

Our Gurus themselves called religious books *Pothi* (book). Guru Nanak wrote,” Now the *Pothi*, the Pandits and their Puranas have lost their influence.”<sup>262</sup>

<sup>259</sup> ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੇ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਆਨੇਰਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪) ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੇ ਚੂਕੈ ਨਹੀ ਫੇਰੀ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੨). A Guru does not die. Only a Shabad Guru lives forever.

<sup>260</sup> ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੁ ਸਖਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ ਰਹਰਾਸਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦) “The Guru’s Teaching is my life-long friend. The singing of the Lord’s Praises is my prayer routine.. ਅਬਿਚਲ ਨੀਵ ਧਰਾਈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਕਬਹੂ ਡੋਲਤ ਨਾਹੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੨੬) ਅਬਿਚਲ ਨੀਵ ਧਰੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਚੜੈ ਸਵਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੦੦)

<sup>261</sup> The old copies of Guru Granth Sahib had the word ਪੋਥੀ written on them. The *Pothi* became the Guru only after 1708 AD. The word *Pothi* is used for the scripture in Prem Sumarg (see P.6). Bhai Sukha Singh writes, “ਪੋਥੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮਾਲ ਦਸ ਬਾਣੀ (ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਸੁਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ )

<sup>262</sup> ਪੋਥੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਰਹੇ ਪੁਰਾਣ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਉ ਭਇਆ ਰਹਮਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦੩) “ਪੋਥੀ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਭਉ ਵਟੀ ਇਤੁ ਤਨਿ

Guru Arjan Dev also called it “*Pothi*” (sacred book) <sup>263</sup> and wrote, “When I opened the treasure of my ancestors, I was enriched.” Obviously he was not opening the treasure chest in the literal sense; he was referring to the Holy writings of the previous Gurus contained in the *Pothi Sahib*. He imbibed the wisdom of our Great Gurus and passed it on to the posterity.

Bhagat Kabir also called the scripture *Pothi*, “ਮੂਡ ਪਲੋਸਿ ਕਮਰ ਬਧਿ ਪੋਥੀ ॥ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਚਾਬਨੁ ਉਨ ਕਉ ਰੋਟੀ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੧)

There are copious references in Bhai Gurdas calling the Granth as “*Pothi*”(Book)<sup>264</sup>. It should also be noted that the word “*Granth*” itself means a big book. Even in Bhai Banno’s rescension the word “*Pothi*” is used for it.<sup>265</sup> By calling the Holy Granth a book its importance is not reduced. Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Hindus all call their scripture books and still hold them sacred.

It is absurd to think that if man had not learnt to read, write and produce *Granth*s, there would have been no Guru or that the Guru is dependant on man’s ability to produce him. According to Sikhism a Guru is ever present and is eternal.<sup>266</sup> The real Guru of the Sikhs is the “*Word*”<sup>267</sup>.

---

ਪਾਈਐ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਬੁਝਣੁ ਆਣਿ ਜਲਾਈਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫) ਪਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਪੋਥੀ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਪਾਠਾ ॥ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਪੜੈ ਸੁਣਿ ਥਾਟਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੬)

<sup>263</sup> ਪੋਥੀ ਗੀਤ ਕਵਿਤ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਕਰਨਿ ਧਰਿਆ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੭੦) ਪੋਥੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਗੀਤ ਕਵਿਤ ਕਵਤੇ ਭੀ ਜਾਸੀ ॥ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀਆ ਸਭਿ ਕਾਲੈ ਵਾਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੦੦) ਪੋਥੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਬੇਦ ਖੋਜਤਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ ਹੋਇ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵੰਤਾ ਜੀਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੬) ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਪੁਕਾਰਨਿ ਪੋਥੀਆਂ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਭਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਗਾਲੀ ਹੋਛੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੧) ਤੀਰਥ ਦੇਵ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਪੋਥੀ॥ ਮਾਲਾ ਤਿਲਕੁ ਸੋਚ ਪਾਕੁ ਰੋਤੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੩੭) ਖਟੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਅਰੁ ਆਸਣੁ ਧੋਤੀ॥ ਭਾਗਨਿ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਪੜੈ ਨਿਤ ਪੋਥੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੮)

<sup>264</sup> “ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਲਿਖ ਪੋਥੀਆਂ ਤਾਲ ਮ੍ਰਿਦੰਗ ਰਬਾਬ ਬਜਾਵੈ (ਵਾਰ ੬),

<sup>265</sup> ਸੰਮਤ ੧੬੫੯ ਮਿਤੀ ਅਸੂ ਵਦੀ ਏਕਮ ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖਿ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਨਕਲ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ।

<sup>266</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬੋਹਿਬੁ ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦੀ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮਿ ਨਿਸਤਾਰਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨੯) ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਨਾ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੯) ਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਨਾਲੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੪)

<sup>267</sup> ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦੧) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੫) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਕਾਸਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਰਸਨ ਬਸਾਯਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੭) ) ਸਬਦੇ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਗੁਰੁ ਰੂਪਿ ਮੁਰਾਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੧੨)

Since the modern methods of recording the sound had not yet been invented in the times of our Gurus, the Guru's "Word" could only be conveyed to posterity by recording it in a book. Guru Granth Sahib became the Guru of the Sikhs only because it enshrined the "Word" of our Gurus otherwise there were (and still are) millions of other Granths.<sup>268</sup> We show utmost respect and reverence to the Granth because it is the seat of the sacred "Word"<sup>269</sup> which is our Guru. If somebody translates Guru Granth Sahib (Guru=sacred, Granth=Book) as sacred book or scripture, He should not be condemned or ridiculed instead it should be explained to him that the Guru's "Word" has sanctified this *Granth* and the object of reverence for the Sikhs is the Guru's numinous "Word", not the visible form of the book. The Sikhs do not bow to the paper, ink, binding or the cloth accompanying the "Word" because that would mean worshipping material things forbidden to the Sikhs. The genuine respect for Guru Granth Sahib does not lie simply in calling it Guru Granth Sahib instead of 'A sacred Book'. The genuine respect lies in reading the scripture and living a life of virtue according to its principles.

It is time the Sikhs stopped considering the Guru Granth Sahib as an image or a statue for ritual worship and make *Gurbani* available to the whole world in translations. The Guru's "Word" whether in original or in translations, cannot be desecrated, defiled or sullied by naming it a book. It is mystical and supernatural not material. The genuine respect for the "Word" does not lie simply in calling it Guru and never going beyond bowing to it.

### 8.3 Printing and distribution of the Granth

Until 1865 AD the Guru Granth Sahib was written by hand and sometimes one and the same copy was written by more than one person. From 1865 to 1890 AD the Holy Granth was printed through lithography. The printers and publishers (like Kohinoor press, Mufeed Am press, Aftab press, Chame Noor press, Wazir Hind press, and Ganesh Das press) printed and sold the Granth in various sizes and formats. They even committed hundreds of printing mistakes. One can easily imagine what sort of respect these trade-orientated and non-Sikh publishers may have shown to the Granth at the time of printing and selling.

---

<sup>268</sup> ਅਸੀਖ ਗਰੰਥ ਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦ ਪਾਠ ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੩)

<sup>269</sup> ਪੋਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਬਾਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੨੬)

During 1880-1887AD Kanwar Bikram Singh and Professor Gurmukh Singh raised the issue of respect for the Granth and its correct printing and sale. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Lahore asked for a law regarding the publication rights of the Granth and for banning its sale in shops. The publishers vehemently opposed the demand because their trade was to be adversely affected. They raised a number of issues, which could not be resolved before the death of the two great protagonists. The issue is still alive.

1. The printing and distribution of the Granth and Gutkas etc should be in the hands of a single Sikh organisation authorised by law to publish and supply them. Each copy should be numbered and a proper record should be kept of the distribution. Members of this organisation should be well versed in Sikh history and philosophy.
2. The Granth should be offered free to qualifying organisations, Sikhs Gurdwaras and research scholars.
3. Translations of Gurbani should be permitted but they should first be checked by the said organisation against misrepresentation of Sikhism. They should be printed and supplied by the said organisation but the writers should be offered the necessary royalty.
4. The above organisation should institute research in Sikh history by offering stipends to researchers and publish their work by offering proper remuneration.
5. Old and unserviceable copies of the Granth should be received back by the said organisation, written off and their disposal properly recorded. Copies, which have historical importance, need to be properly preserved for posterity.

## Chapter Nine

### Meeri Peeri

Readers of the history of India would know that although Indian people boast of doughty warriors like Karna and Arjuna etc,<sup>270</sup> there came a time when they nearly lost all their valour and manliness. This happened when after the battle of Kalinga Emperor Ashoka abandoned the use of the sword and adopted non-violence as the guiding principle for all Indians. This was in agreement with the principles of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and *renunciation* so assiduously preached by Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism at that time. But *Ahimsa* and active resistance do not go together and are antipodes of each other. People became cowards to an extent that they would not even kill a fly.<sup>271</sup> High spirits and bravery were thus abandoned and religion became a matter of personal salvation only. Loyalty in times of need remained confined only to the immediate members of the family. This prompted foreign invaders to come like wind and go back like whirlwind looting and plundering the country without facing any effective resistance. Even shepherds like Timur plucked up courage to ravage the country and take away beautiful damsels<sup>272</sup> for sale in Afghan markets while the Indian nation of so-called warriors simply quailed and quivered before him. Not a single *Sant* or religious leader raised his voice against such rape, repression and rapacity until Guru Nanak felt irresistible compulsion to speak up.<sup>273</sup> The seed of *Meeri Peeri* principle was sown. It only needed careful nurturing.

Although the words Meer (Temporal authority) and Peer (Spiritual authority) have been used by Guru Nanak umpteen times, the combination of both *Meeri* and *Peeri* has only been derived from various statements of

<sup>270</sup> Arjuna, the brother-in-law of Lord Krishna, is known as the invincible prince. However it is also a fact that while he was escorting the ladies of the family from Dwarka, he was waylaid and looted by the Bheels.

<sup>271</sup> ਹਮ ਤੇ ਤੋਲਣ ਜਾਣੇ ਤਕੜੀ, ਨੰਗੀ ਕਰਦ ਨਾ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਪਕੜੀ । ਚਿਤੀ ਉਤੇ ਡਰ ਸੇ ਮਰ ਜਾਏਂ, ਮੁਗਲੋਂ ਸੇ ਕੈਸੇ ਲੜ ਪਾਏਂ?

<sup>272</sup> Later in the Mughal period the Hindus themselves started offering their sisters and daughters to the Mughals and considered it an honour.

<sup>273</sup> Maratha saint Eknath (c.1586) writes, "Hindus had become so dependant that they accepted leftovers from the food of Turkish Muslim rulers at the time of Eid."

the Sikh Gurus and the history of the Sikhs. To state it in a nutshell 'it is the combination of a new man (Gurmukh), and a new social order (Panth), and a new political set up (Khalsa protectorate=ਲੋਕ ਤੰਤਰ) "...a fully democratic compact community, armed to the teeth, struggling to maintain what it conceived to be the right path and fighting incessantly and without compunction, tyranny and injustice in all their forms." (I.B.Bannerjee 'Evolution of the Khalsa Part 2 Page).<sup>274</sup>

Some people associate *Meeri Peeri* with Guru Hargobind whereas others argue that it had started with Guru Nanak who originated the concept of worldly sovereignty and spiritual elevation for all who followed him. The latter groups argue that in Sikhism temporal and spiritual go hand in hand and were duly sanctioned by Guru Nanak. The proper use of political power (even if it entailed militancy) was justified and sanctioned by Guru Nanak if such power was used for a noble and egalitarian cause.

Guru Nanak was using moral power and arousing the people of India to value their culture and traditions. It was not his aim to enslave others or wage a war but he was aware that power was necessary to resist the onslaught of foreigners who were trampling the Indian culture. He knew that *Bhakti* (spiritualism) without *Shakti* (Power) was too vulnerable and *Shakti* without *Bhakti* (as was practised by Babar, Hitler or Changez Khan) was bound to become fascist. He wanted to steer clear of both these extremes and therefore concentrated more on *Bhakti* than *Shakti*.<sup>275</sup> The *Bhakti* remained supreme in his system and was to act as a guide for *Shakti* and this combination later came to be called *Meeri* and *Peeri*.

Although Guru Nanak was not openly a political activist and never raised a sword, his ideas about kingship, administrative set-up of the time and political exploitation are stated explicitly and give us the impression that he was not completely immune to politics and the effects of foreign invasions. In fact in his *Babar Bani* he admonishes the Lodhi rulers and analyses the causes of the defeats of the Indians.

<sup>274</sup> "ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰੇਣ ਰਛਿਤੋ ਦੇਸੇ ਸ਼ਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਵ੍ਰਿਤਤੋ" Knowledge and education flourish only if the sword shields the country.

<sup>275</sup> "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." (Preamble to the constitution of UNESCO.). This is what Guru Nanak thought.



He tells us that the Indians depended more on magic than might and thus brought about their own downfall.<sup>276</sup> He even talks about their inferior weapons<sup>277</sup> and explicitly exhorts the Indians for sacrifice. He said: “If you wish to play the game of love (for your country), Come and join me with your head on your palms. Those who join me must be ready to die for the cause and may not flinch from fighting.”<sup>278</sup> He even persuaded the Indians openly to rise against the foreign invaders when he said, *if one lives in dishonour; then everything one eats is like eating carrion.*<sup>279</sup> Such strong words cannot be attributed to an *Ahimsa* loving, salvation seeking, self-negating Sadhu.

No Hindu saint throughout the length and breadth of India had raised even an eyebrow when the powerful Emperor Babar invaded India and perpetrated indignities on the Indian people. Only Guru Nanak plucked up courage and openly condemned Babar as an aggressor and his army a pack of sinners.<sup>280</sup> He even complained to God and asked, “Such atrocities have been committed didn’t you feel pain?”<sup>281</sup> He castigated the rulers of India as people “more interested in enjoyment and profligacy than in the protection of their countrymen.”<sup>282</sup> He boldly passed judgements on their state of justice and their suitability as rulers and even called them bloodthirsty hounds.<sup>283</sup> Can such vitriolic comments be expected from a coward who advocates only spiritualism and abhors militancy?

<sup>276</sup> ਕੋਟੀ ਹੂ ਪੀਰ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਏ ਜਾ ਮੀਰੁ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਧਾਇਆ ॥ ਬਾਨ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਜਲੇ ਬਿਜ ਮੰਦਰ ਮੁਛਿ ਮੁਛਿ ਕੁਇਰ ਰੁਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਕੋਈ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਨ ਹੋਆ ਅੰਧਾ ਕਿਨੈ ਨ ਪਰਚਾ ਲਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧੮) “Learning about the imminent attack of Babar the Muslim Pirs and divines used spells and incantations to stop him. He came nevertheless, burned and razed to the ground their mansions, and cut the nobles and princes to pieces. The spells and charms spelt no blindness and proved useless. (AGGS P.418)

<sup>277</sup> ਮੁਗਲ ਪਠਾਣਾ ਭਈ ਲੜਾਈ ਰਣ ਮਹਿ ਤੋਗ ਵਗਾਈ ॥ ਓਨੀ ਤੁਪਕ ਤਾਣਿ ਚਲਾਈ ਓਨੀ ਹਸਤਿ ਚਿੜਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧੮) “Ferocious battle raged between the Mughals and the Pathans (rulers of India). Swords flashed and clashed. The Mughlals aimed accurately and fired their guns whereas the Pathns thought it below dignity to come down from their elephants. (AGGS P.418)

<sup>278</sup> ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੋਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥ ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨) Khwaja Hafiz says “The minimum price required for loyalty to the Guru is your head. If you can’t pay this price do not fall in love” ਕਮੀਨਾ ਸ਼ਰਤੋ ਵਫਾ ਤਰਕੋ ਸਰ ਬਵਦ ਹਾਫਿਜ਼, ਬਰੋ ਅਗਰ ਜੇਤੂੰਈ ਕਾਰ ਬਰ ਨਮੇ ਆਇਦ॥

<sup>279</sup> ਜੇ ਜੀਵੈ ਪਤਿ ਲਬੀ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਹਰਾਮੁ ਜੇਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨)

<sup>280</sup> ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਜੰਵ ਲੈ ਕਾਬਲਹੁ ਧਾਇਆ ਜੋਰੀ ਮੰਗੈ ਦਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੨) ਖੂਨ ਕੇ ਸੋਹਿਲੇ ਗਾਵੀਅਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਤੁ ਕਾ ਕੁੰਗੁ ਪਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੨)

<sup>281</sup> ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੬੦)

<sup>282</sup> ਸਾਹਾਂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗਵਾਈਆ ਰੰਗਿ ਤਮਾਸੈ ਚਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧੭)

<sup>283</sup> ਰਾਜੇ ਸੀਹ ਮੁਕਦਮ ਕੁਤੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੮) ਰਾਜੇ ਚੁਲੀ ਨਿਆਵ ਕੀ ਪਤਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪੦) ਰਾਜਾ ਤਖਤਿ ਟਿਕੈ ਗੁਣੀ ਭੈ ਪੰਚਾਇਣ ਰਤੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੯੨)

Later Guru Amar Das also said the same thing when he wrote, “*Surrender thy body, mind, wealth, and everything to the Guru and obey the Order to deserve bliss.*” In fact it is a strain throughout the whole of Guru Granth Sahib that a Sikh should be ready to lay down his life for the Guru and the public good.<sup>284</sup>

Guru Arjan Dev clarified the concept as follows:

“The kind Lord has now issued the command  
That no one from now onward dominates others or causes tyranny.  
And all would abide in peace and happiness.  
Thus shall be realised here and now  
A new era of tolerance and compassion.”<sup>285</sup>

Because of his egalitarian manifesto the Guru soon became an eyesore for the prejudiced Emperor Jehangir who had assumed the autocratic right to foist the secular as well as the spiritual laws on all his citizens. He decided to convert the Guru to Islam. Propaganda mill was set in full swing to discredit the Guru, demonise him and pressurize him to tow the line. On the other hand the persecuted millions had now pinned their hopes on the Guru to save them from political oppression and bigotry. People were ready to resist evil tooth and nail. According to Muhammad Latif “*The Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly Lord and a ruling sovereign* (S.M.Latif “History of the Panjab” P.253). During this charged atmosphere prince Khusrau rebelled against the Emperor. It was now easy to falsely accuse the Guru of sympathies with the rebel prince. “*There was a regular conspiracy against the Guru and we are told that besides participation in Khusarau’s rebellion, the charges against the Guru also included the allegations that he called himself TRUE Guru*”(Transformation of Sikhism Viii. P.3)<sup>286</sup> Muhammad Latif writes that the imperial policies towards the Guru had begun to change the perception of the ordinary people concerning the Guru’s popularity.

<sup>284</sup> ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸਭੁ ਸਉਪਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੮) ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਅਰਪੀ ਸਭੇ ਸਗਲ ਵਾਰੀਐ ਇਹੁ ਜਿੰਦੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭) ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਅਰਪੀ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਗਉ ਪਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮੭) ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਗੈ ਰਾਖਿਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੩)

<sup>285</sup> ਹੁਣਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੋਆ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਣ ਦਾ॥ਧੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸੈ ਰਵਾਣਦਾ॥ ਸਭ ਸੁਖਾਲੀ ਵੁਠੀਆ ਇਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਲੇਮੀ ਰਾਜੁ ਜੀਓ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪)

<sup>286</sup> The words TRUE GURU (ਸੱਚਾ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ) may have been popularised by Bhai Gurdas who wrote, “ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਚਾ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਹੋਰ ਕੂੜੇ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੈ ”The Guru was too humble to call himself a True Guru.

It appears that the Guru knew about the coming events and was preparing his followers to meet the challenge.<sup>287</sup> He was soon arrested, tortured and martyred at Lahore (1606 AD).<sup>288</sup> The martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev jolted the Sikhs. They were now convinced that their movement was facing certain extinction. There was no alternative but to fight in self-defence.

It was under such circumstances that Guru Hargobind, who was only eleven years old, became the next Guru of the Sikhs. He realized that the power-mad autocrat Jehangir was dead to all sense of humanity, and capitulation to him would prolong cruelty and injustice. Time had come to meet tyranny head on to save people's rights and their religion from certain extinction therefore he brought into play the secondary part (resistance to tyranny) of Guru Nanak's philosophy. He took a momentous decision to resort to arms and began arming his followers. This was a direct challenge to the legal restriction, which permitted only certain Muslims and Rajputs to bear arms.

On 25<sup>th</sup> May 1606 AD at the time of his investiture as the next Guru, he donned two swords on his person. On being asked the reason for wearing two swords the Guru is said to have remarked, "One sword represents "*Peeri*" (spiritual independence-Prophet hood) and the other represents "*Meeri*" (Temporal independence-Citizen's right). Since the first sword he wore was that of "*Peeri*" (Guruship), the Sikhs would always choose spiritual over the temporal affairs. Thus the Guru openly and symbolically combined spiritual and temporal aspects of human life and declared that at times the *Sants* may have to resort to sword to annihilate evil."<sup>289</sup>

<sup>287</sup> He also preached the same philosophy as preached by Guru Nanak when he wrote, "ਪਹਿਲਾ ਮਰਣੁ ਕਬੂਲਿ ਜੀਵਣ ਕੀ ਛਡਿ ਆਸ ॥ ਹੋਹ ਸਭਨਾ ਕੀ ਰੇਣੁਕਾ ਤਉ ਆਉ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਪਾਸਿ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੦੨) In the same vein Guru Amar Das had written ਮਰਣੁ ਜੀਵਣੁ ਜੋ ਸਮ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੯).

<sup>288</sup> Whenever an unjust judge controls the pen, some saint dies upon the gibbet (Jalal-ud-din Roomi) Jehangir wrote in his diary; "They called him Guru and foolish people flocked from all sides to express great devotion to him. This false traffic had been going on for three or four generations. For years the thought had been visiting my mind to put an end to this false traffic or convert him to the fold of Islam on some pretext." (*Tuzak-e-Jehagiri* P.35)

<sup>289</sup> Muslim Prophet Muhammad fought all through his life. Although Christ himself did not fight, his followers led wars on the Muslims. Hindu god Ram Chander carried *Dhanush baan* and fought a war against Ceylon, Krishna carried *Sudarshan Chakra* and encouraged Arjun to fight the war of Mahabharata, Hanuman carried a mace (ਗਦਾ), Paras Ram used a great axe as a weapon. As for wearing two swords the Khalifas have been using dual authority of spiritual and temporal power since old times by wearing two swords. One of the Popes used to wear two swords. Martin Luther had challenged the "Papal doctrine of the two swords with its claim that the Pope was the ultimate source of all authority temporal as well as spiritual". ('Political Ideas' by David Thomson 1972 page 30).

From that very day he began to instil Spirituality and bravery into the minds of the Sikhs. He sent messages to his followers to bring arms and horses to him and employed ballad singers to sing ballads of brave men to warm up the blood of the people who had become cowards. Military exercises became a daily routine. An army drum (an attribute only of sovereignty) was beaten twice a day in violation of the law that prohibited anyone beating a drum. Soon he established a fort outside Amritsar and named it LOHGARH (fort of steel). A pennant was also designed, which has since then become the flag of the nation and is known as *Nishan Sahib*.

In 1609AD he caused *Akal Takhat* (throne of the Almighty) to be constructed at the feet of Harimander Sahib. This positioning of the Akal Takhat was symbolic of the lower importance of politics to that of spirituality. But for the establishment of Akal Takhat and the arming of the Sikhs, the Sikh movement was in danger of quickly regressing into another Hindu sect. The message of the Akal Takhat was loud and clear that the Panth was meant to perform very high duties in addition to spiritual uplift of the Indian people. This reaction of Guru Hargobind was not an aggressive reaction but a logical consequence of the communal consciousness of the Sikhs and Guru Nanak's philosophy, which were under serious threat. Having completed the above arrangements he declared *Deg* (Charity) and *Tegh* (Power) as his instruments of action. The Sikhs began to assemble regularly, discuss their problems and find solutions. He was arrested in 1609AD and imprisoned at Gwalior but fearing popular revolts, was released in 1611 AD. After the death of the Emperor in 1627AD, bigotry once again raised its head when Emperor Shah Jahan destroyed many Hindu temples including the *Baoli Sahib* (birth place of Guru Ram Das at Lahore). This provocation was enough to enrage the Sikhs and armed conflicts soon broke out between the Government and the Sikhs in which the Mughal commander Mukhlis Khan lost his life. According to *Mohsin Fani*<sup>290</sup> volunteers flocked from all sides and soon "*The Guru had seven hundred horses in his stables; and three hundred cavaliers and sixty artillerymen were always in his service.*"

The Guru moved away to Kartarpur to ease the situation but he was attacked by the Mughal *faujdar* (commander) of Jalandhar. This time the

---

<sup>290</sup> Mohsin Fani was known to Guru Har Gobind and had met him on many occasions. He wrote a detailed Religious History of India titled *Dabistan-e-Mazahib*.

*faujdar* too lost his life. Later in another battle in 1632 AD the Mughal generals Kale Khan and Painde Khan were killed. Thus we see that it was not the Guru's intention to change the character of the Sikhs but the policies of the Government had left the Guru with no alternative but to defend his nascent religion.

Guru Hargobind's struggles, sufferings and especially successes had the magical effect of changing the coward people into an army of brave and staunch soldiers. This metamorphosis had been accomplished in defiance of the hide-bound prejudices and conservatism of the old Hindu religious concepts and the hegemony of the bigot Government of the time. The concept of *Meeri Peeri* had been tested for the first time and had proved effective.

A Hindu *Sant* Samrath Ram Das met Guru Hargobind Sahib at Garhwal in 1634 AD. He asked him to explain why he had switched from the peaceful posture adapted by Guru Nanak to the one he had adopted by wielding a sword. The Guru replied, "*There is nothing new in what I have done. Saintliness strengthens the mind and the sword protects the oppressed. I am internally a Sant and externally a warrior*",<sup>291</sup> After this statement of the sixth Guru the Sikhs began to consider the doctrine of *Meeri Peeri* as a fundamental and most essential doctrine of the Sikhs. Historians began to justify that temporal and the spiritual in Sikhism were in tandem and there existed no dichotomy between them. It was also argued that this ideology of the Sikhs differentiated Sikhism from most other religions.

A question is usually asked that if the concept of *Meeri* and *Peeri* was so significant why was it not clearly stated by the first five Gurus who never wielded a sword? Why is it that even the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Gurus did not mention it and justify it when it had already been started by the Sixth Guru?<sup>292</sup>

---

<sup>291</sup> On hearing this Samrath Ram Das said, "*yeh hamare man bhavti hai*" (This appeals to my mind) see Sakhi Number 39 in "*Panjah Sakhian*" (ਪੰਜਾਹ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ). There is a reference to this meeting in *Samarthanchi Bhakhar* (1793) published by Gogate Bombay 1910. The Guru had to fight 18 battles in defence. No territory was occupied and no treasures were plundered. He spent seven years of his 38 years Guruship life in fighting.

<sup>292</sup> Some historians mention that Guru Arjan Dev was an excellent horse rider and was very good at throwing a spear. He kept a number of horses looked after by Khera Fafra, nephew of Bhai Behlo, who later became a renowned Sikh. Guru Har Gobind and Guru Rai had armies. Guru Harkrishan died young. Guru Tegh Bahadur fought his first battle when he was merely a boy. A fighter does not have to declare his motto time and again. The manifesto is declared only once and that was done by Guru Har Gobind when the followers were ready for war.

McLeod writes, “Guru Hargobind had adopted a new policy, one which dramatically expresses in donning of two symbolic swords.” In other words he feels that *Meeri* and *Peeri* are not complementary but contradictory and that it was a new policy different from that of Guru Nanak.

It needs to be understood that in Indian religions there had been a dichotomy between spiritual life and empirical life. They preached peace and renunciation but fought wars. For example the followers of Hindu scripture Gita preach peace but forget that Gita itself was the result of a fratricide war between the members of the same family. Ramayana preaches peace but the whole story talks of war.<sup>293</sup> Muslims claim that Islam preaches peace but prophet Muhammad fought battles all through his life. Sikhism broke this tradition by considering that the defence of religion is as important as the defence of a country and established that like the negative and positive existing side by side in nature *Meeri* and *Peeri* must also exist in humans at all times.

*Meeri* is purely temporal and entails fairness, justice, law, nationalistic feelings and egalitarian principles etc. The Sikh history tells us that in Sikhism the spirit of revolt against injustice, unfair treatment and nationalistic aspirations did not start and end with Guru Har Gobind, the sixth Guru, with whom this concept is usually associated.

History tells us that Guru Nanak courted arrest and imprisonment for opposing the tyranny of Babar. Guru Amar Das refused to pay discriminatory tax and thus invited the wrath of the Government. Guru Arjan Dev declined to enter the praises of Muhammad in the Holy Granth. Guru Hargobind had to fight a war even when he was busy in the wedding of his daughter. Guru Har Rai spurned the official order to appear in the court at Delhi and ostracized his son who had shown weakness to the Emperor, and Guru Tegh Bahadur accepted death than dishonour. The *Meeri* preached by Sikhism is not lust for political power.

---

<sup>293</sup> Although *Meeri Peer* was concretised by Guru Hargobind and later Guru Gobind Singh re-established it, the seeds were sown by Guru Nanak himself. If Guru Tegh Bahadur only practised *Peeri* then he would not have sacrificed his life to safeguard the rights of the others. Even Guru Gobind Singh declared openly that his war was against tyranny and oppression, which was his religious duty to uproot. “ਅਵਰ ਵਾਸਨਾ ਨਹਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਧਰਮ ਯੁਧ ਕੇ ਚਾਏ (I have no other ambition but to wage war to uphold righteousness). Peace is a treasure but war is a necessity. No religious leader could avoid war.

It is the establishment of universal everlasting rule of justice and fairplay, which is the declared aim of Sikhism.<sup>294</sup>

It is for this reason that no Sikh Guru occupied any land or set up a kingdom. *Meeri* of Sikhism is thus aimed at practically creating “Kingdom of God on earth,” which has been the aspiration of humanity. Only Spiritualism of this calibre can fight for and usher in paradise on earth. When after four generations the Indian mind had been sufficiently strengthened and prepared for resistance the ideal of *Meeri Peeri* was restated by Bhai Gurdas as follows:

*“The worldly kings pass on their kingship to their descendants on their death.*

*They simply inflate their ego and make others obey them like purchased workers. In the house of the Guru the custom is to produce Gurmukhs and just ways”.*<sup>295</sup>

## 9.1 Guru Gobind Singh and militancy?

Some western writers (especially Christian missionaries like McLeod, Archer and Loehlin) compare Guru Nanak with Guru Gobind Singh and complain that Guru Gobind Singh turned the pacifist movement of Guru Nanak into a militarised sect.<sup>296</sup>

Even Arnold Toynbee, who finds Sikhism an excellent religion, faltered on this issue. He writes that the religion of Guru Gobind Singh was “*Qualitatively different, if not diametrically opposed to that of Guru Nanak*”

---

<sup>294</sup> ਇਕ ਦੋਹੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਇਕ ਕੁਤਬਾ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਸਚਾ ਦਰਗਾਹੀ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੨੬ ਪ: ੩੧)

<sup>295</sup> ਦੁਨੀਆਵਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਹੋਇ ਦੇਇ ਮਰੈ ਪੁਤੈ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ । ਦੋਹੀ ਫੇਰੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬੰਦੇ ਸਭ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ॥ ਬਾਬਾਣੇ ਘਰਿ ਚਾਲ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗਾਡੀ ਰਾਹੁ ਨਿਬਾਹੀ

<sup>296</sup> The missionary zeal of Loehlin and McLeod are reasons for their criticism of Sikhism. Their hidden agenda is to create a cleavage among the Sikhs and undermine their beliefs. It is acknowledged on all sides that the spiritual unity preached by Guru Nanak was at no time impaired by any of his successors.. The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh had no political aspirations. The sword had to be used to remove the obstacle in the path of spiritual development of the Indian nation. The aim of the 10<sup>th</sup> Guru is clearly stated as “ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਣ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ । ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਭਨ ਕਉ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ ॥ This is the same as that preached by Guru Nanak.

Mahatma Gandhi also complained that Guru Gobind Singh changed the peaceful religion of Guru Nanak into a militant religion.<sup>297</sup> Strangely no Muslim writer has tried to make any difference between the philosophies of Guru Nanak and that of Guru Gobind Singh. Only the Hindu writers and the westerners have raised this issue.

Rabinder Nath Tagore criticised Guru Gobind Singh for abandoning the peaceful path delineated by Guru Nanak and for adopting the sword to chastise his enemies. According to him the Sikh religion, which was a flowing river, ended up into a closed pool of stagnant water. The spiritual development of the Sikhs ceased and they became mere fighters.<sup>298</sup> Rabinder Nath Tagore conveniently ignored the fact that Guru Gobind Singh never neglected the spiritual and moral development of the Sikhs nor did he ignore to attack the social distinctions based on caste, which had marred the Indian society for thousands of years. The use of sword was necessary to save the Sikh community from the ruthless persecution of the Moghul Emperor whose bigotry is well known. Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur had already tried the peaceful means advocated by Rabinder Nath Tagore and Gandhi. Mute response to persecution would have resulted in the extinction of Sikhism. At best the Sikhs would have survived only as an insignificant sect like *Kabir-Panthies* if the Guru had not raised the sword. Again it should be noted that Kabir did not raise a sword but there is no spectacular or discernible spiritual advancement among *Kabir-panthies* after him. Krishana, Rama and Muhammad fought wars but their followers were not in any way spiritually impoverished. About these double standards Dorothy Field writes, “*It must not be*

<sup>297</sup> Gandhi invented a new form of Hinduism when he began to preach *Ahimsa (non-violence)* and in a meeting at Baroda called Guru Gobind Singh “a misguided patriot” for raising a sword to defend the honour and dignity of India. Gandhi’s non-violence was only skin-deep. He openly supported the British in the Second World War, agreed to defend Kashmir by force of arms, lauded police action against Hyderabad and later died a violent death. Nehru, the first Prime minister of India, called him a hypocrite. Did Gandhi not know that a majority of Hindus worship Durga who carries ten weapons, Lord Krishna, Rama, and Parsu Ram were armed to the teeth and fought wars killing their own fellow citizens and relatives? In Gandhi’s eyes these Hindu leaders were true patriots but Guru Gobind Singh who fought the invaders to defend India was a “misguided patriot.” Can there be a more prejudiced and greater ingrate than Gandhi? Was he really following Lord Rama and Krishna, his beau ideals? Once he got a calf killed to release him from incurable pain, but he had no qualms of conscience in releasing millions of human beings from the barbarities and atrocities of the Mughals because it involved violence. He did not care to notice what Guru Gobind Singh said, “*When affairs have gone beyond all means, it is lawful and virtuous to put the hand on the hilt of the sword.*” (ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਾ ਹੀਲਤੋ-ਦਰਗੁਸ਼ਤ। ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬ ਸਮਸੀਰ ਦਸਤ). Guru Gobind Singh’s sword was like a surgeon’s knife which cuts with a purpose.

<sup>298</sup> Rabinder Nath’s assessment was accepted by J.N.Sarkar, who too wrote similarly (Vol. I P.301, 332).



*imagined that because he was a fine warrior he was less spiritual or less religious than his predecessors. He made the religious fervour the backbone of his warlike doctrines. He united practical skill with mystical meditation; and the results speak for themselves."*

The speculation that Guru Nanak's spirituality and philosophy of peace would have spread worldwide if Guru Gobind Singh did not resort to the sword is ill founded. What is certain is that if Guru Gobind Singh had not raised the sword the Hindus of India would not have survived the slavery of the Muslims, which had lasted already for five centuries.

The Sikh movement planned by Guru Nanak was a social, political, religious, and egalitarian revolution, which had taken place in India only for the first time. The main aim was the all round amelioration of the Indian people. India being religious in his days (which it still is), he wanted religious reform to take precedence over political and social reform. If Guru Nanak had openly declared his intention to raise a sword, there would have been opposition not only from the Government of the time but also from the general population, which had become pusillanimous and utterly coward because of *Ahimsa* so assiduously preached by Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. The Guru would have been branded a rebel and his mission would have ended before it even started. This is evident from the fact that nearly 200 years later when Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa, the Hill Rajas opposed him tooth and nail and became the sworn enemies of the Guru in spite of the fact that the Guru was fighting their battles to save the latter's religion and dignity.

The Sikh Gurus were not simply spiritual leaders seeking personal salvation like the Hindu *Sants*. Over and above being religious preceptors they were also practical and social entrepreneurs aiming to spiritually and socially elevate the society they lived in. The blueprint for the Sikh movement was carefully planned and announced by Guru Nanak. According to Gokal Chand Narang, "*.....after centuries of subjection Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise his voice against tyranny and oppression. To achieve that objective people had to be marshalled for active resistance. The concept of passive submission had to yield to that of physical encounter, to which masses had to be awakened.*" (Transformation of Sikhism Page 40) Unfortunately at that early stage the Guru could not take up the sword because he did not have the means to encounter physically the well-established centuries old Government. He

laid the foundations for what was to follow next.

Guru Gobind Singh did not discard the policies of Guru Nanak and suddenly turn militant. He was as much interested in religious, political and social uplift of Indian society, as was Guru Nanak. Therefore the charge of changing the direction of the movement is invalid. In fact there is a strong logical link between the thinking of Guru Nanak and that of the latter Gurus. Each Guru in turn added his bit to the movement. The period from the time of Guru Angad to Guru Ram Das (1539-1581= 42 years) was too short to dissipate energy for a secondary purpose (resistance to tyranny). This time was therefore wisely utilized by the Gurus to get a stronghold in the minds of the people by preaching only the altruistic and spiritual principles of Sikhism (*Peeri*). Resort to arms (*Meeri*) was not a priority because the political power had not yet become as extortionate, bigot and oppressive as it later started becoming under Jehangir<sup>299</sup> and reached its climax under Aurangzeb. It was then that the time had come to turn the ploughshares into the swords. Again it is for this reason that only Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur<sup>300</sup> had instructed their sons to wield the sword and the other Gurus did not do so.

After the sacrifices of peace-loving Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur there was no alternative left for Guru Gobind Singh but to institute the Khalsa to save the nascent Sikh movement from the persecution of the fanatical Muslim rulers. He was not fighting for establishing a kingdom but to defend the fundamental rights of the people, which had been trampled under the jackboot of fanaticism. In this connection Mr. Cunningham explicitly states that Guru Nanak had started a campaign by weaning away his followers from Hindu idolatry, Muslim superstition, and Sidh quietism, which gained continual momentum under the next Gurus and culminated in a much-desired political organisation to shield the religion. He further writes that Guru Gobind Singh “*effectually roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people, and filled them with*

<sup>299</sup> ਨਾਕੁਰ ਦੂਆਰੇ ਢਾਹਿ ਕੇ ਤਿਹ ਠਉੜੀ ਮਾਸੀਤ ਉਸਾਰਾ॥ ਮਾਰਨ ਗਊ ਗਰੀਬ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਤੀ ਉੱਪਰ ਪਾਪ ਵਿਥਾਰਾ (ਭ: ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਪ: ੨੦). In his history *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* Khafi Khan tells us that Aurangzeb ordered all temples to be pulled down (p.413). A proclamation required all Hindus to shave off their beards. Many submitted to this disgrace and for some days it was difficult to find a barber to do the job.

<sup>300</sup> It is said that the Guru Tegh Bahadur had given a word to the distressed and persecuted helpless Hindus that he would remonstrate with the bigot Mughal on their behalf. He kept his word and not only lost his own life but that of his companions as well. “ਬਾਂਹ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਕੜੀਐ । ਸਿਰ ਦੀਜੈ ਬਹਿ ਨ ਛੋਡੀਐ” This was quite in line with the Hindu philosophy of ਰਘੂਪਤਿ ਰੀਤਿ ਸਦ ਚਲੀ ਆਈ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਜਾਏ ਪਰ ਬਚਨ ਨਾ ਜਾਈ which had largely been abandoned by the Indian people.

*lofty although fitful longing for social Freedom and national ascendance, the proper adjuncts of that purity of worship which had been preached by Nanak.*" (Cunningham Page 84) He clarifies the point further and writes, " "It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successor Gobind to fire the minds of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race and in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes."

Mr. I.B.Bannerjee has discussed this issue in detail and concludes, "Those who call this a 'dwarfing of the unity of a religious sect into an internment of political advancement' commit themselves, at the same time, to the absurd proposition that military efficiency or political Freedom is inconsistent with a true religious life." (Evolution of the Khalsa part 2, P.124)

Banda Singh followed the same policy after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Although the Emperor issued an order on December 10, 1710 that the Sikhs "should be killed at sight wherever found." Banda Singh<sup>301</sup> never molested any Muslims, the co-religionists of the Emperor. In his letter dated 29 April 1711 the Mughal newsletter writer wrote about Banda Singh to the Emperor "Any Muslim who approaches him, he fixes a daily allowance and wages and looks after him. He has permitted them to read Khutba and Namaz with the result that five thousand Muslims have gathered round him. Having entered into his friendship, they are free to shout their call (Azan) and recite their prayers in the army of the wretched." {Akhbarat-e-Darbar-e-Muala (Jaipur) Ruqat-e-Amin-ud-Daula No.3 Dastur-al-Insha 6A.

Careful understanding of Sikh history proves that there was no fundamental difference between the philosophies of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh and that *Meeri Peeri* was started by Guru Nanak, nurtured by the next four Gurus, materialized by the 6<sup>th</sup> Guru and concretised by the 10<sup>th</sup> Guru. The Sikhs have always fought against political tyranny, religious intolerance, social inequality and economic exploitation and all this at times demanded unwanted but necessary violence. It was for this

---

<sup>301</sup> Banda Singh was arrested with his 794 colleagues, who were all cruelly butchered in Delhi. British ambassadors John Surman and Edward Stephenson saw the gory spectacle and wrote, "It is not a little remarkable with what patience they undergo their fate, and to the last it has not been found that one apostatised from this new formed religion to save his muddy vesture of decay." (Letter No. XXI to the Governor of Fort William dated March 10, 1716). On June 9, 1716 Banda Singh's flesh was torn with hot pincers and his son's innards were thrust into his mouth before he died.

reason that Akal Takhat (Seat of *Meeri*) was erected later than Harimander (Seat of *Peeri*) and was made to face Harimander the fountain hood of *Bhakti* (spirituality).

Thus we see that the militancy was not a deviation from Guru Nanak's philosophy but only a fulfilment of his ideology. When peace was restored the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> Gurus had no cause for fighting

*"The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was undoubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak."*(Transformation of Sikhism G.C.Narang P.1). Dr. Ernest Trumpp, though not very sympathetic to Sikhism, also wrote that the philosophy of all the Gurus remained the same and that the alleged changes made by Guru Gobind Singh were in line with the doctrines preached by Guru Nanak.

The Sikh ideal is *Sant Sipahi*, which combines spirituality with the courage and bravery of a soldier. Spirituality alone turns one into a coward unable to oppose the world's Halakus and Hitlers and bravery alone turns one into tyrants like the Durranis. The Sikh sword is therefore not an instrument of offence and tyranny but a symbol of defence and protection.

*"When Guru Govind inaugurated the sacrament of steel he proved himself a wise and farsighted leader. For of all material things which genius has inspired with spiritual significance, steel is the truest and most uncompromising. Let humanitarians prate, as they will there never has been a race that have not been purged and refined by it. In some it is the only combater of grossness and the monster of self. To the Khalsa it gave a cause and welded them into a nation, and in the dark days of Muhammadan rule in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Sikh was slain at sight and no quarter was given, it drove them on those gallant crusades in which they rode to Amritsar in the dead of night, leapt into the sacred tank and out again, and galloped back through the enemies' lines purified. Hundreds were slain, but not one abjured his faith or perjured his soul to preserve his 'muddy vesture of decay'. (Edmund Candler in "The Mantle of the East")*

*"In giving them direction and leadership Guru Gobind responded to call of history in a manner which was not at all inconsistent with the essence of Guru Nanak's teachings. On the other hand one might say that tenth*

*Guru's call evolved splendid response because the twin foundations of a new system — spiritual fervour and Freedom from fear — emanated directly from the founder's teachings. From this point of view the emergence of Khalsa was the fulfilment of Guru Nanak's mission."*A.C. Bannerjee page 209-210

## 9.2 Tantric concept unacceptable in Sikhism

The *tantric* concept of the unity of 'Devotion' and 'occult power' (ਭਗਤੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ) is nowhere mentioned in Sikhism.<sup>302</sup> It is a cardinal principle of the *Shakti* cult, which indulges in sex and intoxication to achieve this unity. In his article titled "Guru Gobind Singh and the *Shakti* cult" Jatinder Mohan Chatterji deliberately commits this blunder and writes, "*Gobind Singh's interpretation of Tantric philosophy, teaches man a new way of obtaining salvation through war. Thus he may be considered to be the typical prophet of the Shakti cult.*" This sort of interpretation cannot be put on Sikhism because Guru Granth Sahib strongly condemns prudery, prurience, lasciviousness, and the acts of the *Sakats*.<sup>303</sup>

## 9.3 Meeri Peeri in modern times

It is an acknowledged fact that the Freedom of India from the British in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was inspired by the ideals of Guru Gobind Singh and the contribution of his followers in the Freedom struggle was much greater than their numerical strength would demand. Rabinder Nath Tagore fanned this inspiration by writing poems on the valour of Banda Singh and Guru Gobind Singh. It was the magic of his poems in Bengali language, which was instrumental in bringing together the Bengali and Panjabi Freedom fighters on one stage.

Modern concept of secularism with the legislation for ballot, conflicts with *Meeri Peeri*. These days the power of *Meeri* of a country stems from the votes rather than from any spiritual acumen of its citizens. All kinds of ills, misdemeanours and illegal practices are camouflaged and declared fair if only the ballot box is full. The box then dictates how religion

<sup>302</sup> ਬਿਨ ਭਗਤਿ ਸਕਤਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਰਤ ਪਾਨ (ਅਕਾਲ ਉਸਤਤਿ) ਮੁਕਤਿ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੇ ਸਾਧਨ ਦੋਈ । ਭਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਕੈ ਤੇਗ ਗਹੋਈ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>303</sup> ਕਬੀਰ ਸਾਕਤ ਸੰਗੁ ਨ ਕੀਜੀਐ ਦੂਰਹਿ ਜਾਈਐ ਭਾਗਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭੧) ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਕਿਨੈ ਨਾ ਪਾਇਓ ਫਿਰਿ ਜਨਮਿ ਬਿਨਾਸਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੯੦)

should behave in the context of a fake secular state. Encroachment in religion has therefore become the prerogative of the politician who has the resources and the power to manipulate things to his advantage. Modern day misdirected power (*Shakti*) is smothering *bhakti* (spirituality) under the jackboots of phoney and counterfeit secularism.

## Chapter Ten

### Caste

The Indian caste system (Varan Ashram Dharma)<sup>304</sup> is usually explained by saying that at some time in the history of India the society was divided on the basis of nature of work each person was assigned to do. This was essentially a division of labour regardless of status. Later this practical division became rigid. However the impression one gets from reading the Vedas is that it is in fact the remnant of the high-handed sovereignty of the Aryans upon the indigenous inhabitants of India. The victorious Aryans hated the vanquished locals and reduced them to servants and menial workers. They enforced Varan Ashram Dharma right from the time of the Vedas.<sup>305</sup> Later it was meticulously supported, sustained, nurtured and developed through the Puranas and the Simirities of the Hindu religion.<sup>306</sup>

Over the period of time the upper classes (Brahmans and Kashatryas- both Aryans) assumed dignity, shunned labour, became respectable, and even

<sup>304</sup> Strictly speaking Caste is different from Varan Ashram (colour prejudice). It is a Portuguese word meaning 'Social division'. However in India Varan Ashram Dharma slowly degenerated into caste system and was applied rigidly by associating caste with profession and birth. Thus it became a schism of the soul.

<sup>305</sup> The Aryans brought colour (later caste) prejudice with them and it is also mentioned in the Avesta literature of the Aryans. The Iranian Aryans were divided into Atharvas, Rathestas, Vastrias, and Huiti. ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੇਅਸਯ ਮੁਖਮਾਸੀਦ ਬਾਹੂ ਰਾਜਨਯ: ਕ੍ਰਿਤ: , ਉਤੁ ਤਦਸਯ ਯਦਵੈ-ਸਯ: ਪਦਭਯਾਗਵੈ ਸੂਦਰੋ ਅਜਾਯਾਤ (ਯਜੁਰ ਵੇਦ ਅਧਯਾਯ ੩੧ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ੧੧) See also Purusha Sukta of Rig Veda. ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਵਿਚੋਂ, ਕਸ਼ਤ੍ਰੀ ਬਾਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ, ਵੈਸ਼ ਪੱਟਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਦਰ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ॥ Later we find Tulsi Das writing, “ਸੇਵੀਐ ਵਿਪ੍ਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਗੁਣ ਹੀਨਾ, ਸੂਦਰ ਨ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਗਯਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਵੀਨਾ” (ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਗਿਆਨਹੀਣ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਵੀ ਪੂਜਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸੂਦਰ ਗਿਆਨਵਾਨ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਵੀ ਨਖਿਧ ਹੈ ) Also see Gita XV, II- 47 and read “Were castes formulated in the age of Rig Veda?” by V.M.Apte.

<sup>306</sup> Such was the hatred with low castes that they lived outside towns and had to drag a bush behind them or ring a bell to indicate their low status. Even in the times of the Peshwas the Mahars of Poona were not permitted to enter the town after 3. PM lest their long shadow defiles the upper classes. Caste was considered to be inalienably associated with birth. No one was allowed to change his/her caste. It is said that once a Kashatrya king (Wishvamitra) requested Vashishta to permit his entry into Brahmanism. The request was spurned. Later Wishvamitra approached Brahma and again expressed his desire to abjure Kashatrya caste and become a Brahman. Even Brahma declined to accept his request.

worshipful but the downtrodden lower classes turned into labourers. The upper classes became richer and richer without doing work whereas the lower working classes became poorer and poorer in spite of backbreaking hard labour. The dignity of labour was thus completely lost. To add insult to injury all this was associated with religion and the lower classes were forbidden from reading religious books or visiting Hindu temples.<sup>307</sup> They were supposed only to obey the Brahman who interpreted the scripture for them. Such was the deep-rooted effect of caste prejudices that as late as the seventeenth century AD a Brahman is said to have declined to anoint the nationalist leader Shiva ji as a ruler just because the latter belonged to a lower caste.<sup>308</sup>

At the time of Guru Nanak (1469-1539 AD) there were about 3000 sub-castes and four main divisions (Brahman, Kashatarya, Vaish and Shudra) in India. It had given rise to social inequality, bigotry and lack of respect for manual labour. This well-established *Chakarvyuh* (Maiz) was difficult to break. Even the low castes themselves had psychologically succumbed to it and did not dare to oppose it. They were fully satisfied with remaining in their caste and working as serfs. Rigid enforcement of caste hierarchy also resulted in restrictions on connubium and convivial associations, which were enforced by unwritten law.

Mr. McLeod complains that the Sikh Gurus claimed to have abolished caste system but they did so only in the religious sphere and left out the society.<sup>309</sup> It should be clear that Guru Nanak started the process of abolishing caste differences through preaching and through *Sangat* (free association) and *Pangat* (*inter-dining*) institutions.

---

<sup>307</sup> Ram Chandra killed a *shudra* named Shambhook because the latter was praying to God. “ *In its social doctrine, the Gita was not egalitarian, but staunchly attached to the caste system, and to it only the Brahman and the Kashatrya were noble by birth.*” (‘Hinduism’ by Niradh Chaudhri Page 266).

<sup>308</sup> Shiva Ji had to arrange *Yagyas* for 4 months and feed 11000 Brahmans before he could be anointed. It is said that he spent 50 Lakhs of rupees just to earn the right to be anointed as a ruler. Some writers estimate it to be Rs. 700.000000 (Read The menace of Hindu imperialism by D.J Maharaj page 166)

<sup>309</sup> McLeod is tarnishing Sikhism by design because he has been a Christian Missionary in the Panjab. He feels that Christianity can take root among the Sikhs only if Sikhism is disparaged and undermined. McLeod basis most of his criticism of Sikhism on the available biography of Guru Nanak which, we all know, is legendary and full of myths. Besides biographies (*Janam Sakhis*) were not written by the Gurus and neither was any of them approved by any Sikh Guru as a correct record of events.



Later the Khalsa was a logical culmination of it when Guru Gobind Singh finally swept caste aside from the Indian Society by offering *Amrit to all castes* from the same bowl.<sup>310</sup>

*“Prior to the time of the Sikh Gurus, no general ever conceived the idea of raising an army from men, who were believed to be unclean and polluted from their birth; but the watchword and war-cry of the Sikhs, Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh, and the stimulating precepts of the tenth Guru, altered what had hitherto been deemed dregs of humanity into warriors whose prowess and loyalty never failed their leaders ” (M.A. Macauliffe Vol.v P.93).*

The Khalsa stood for a casteless society but the pernicious elements of the caste, which had gone deep into the psyche of the Indians, were difficult to root out completely.<sup>311</sup> Soon after Guru Gobind Singh's death the Sikhs reverted to the jungles and the caste system raised its head again under the influence of the Brahmans who had taken over the Sikh religious places. They distorted and misrepresented the tenets of Sikhism since there was nobody to counteract their nefarious designs.

## 10.1 What the Gurus did to oppose caste prejudice

Guru Nanak clearly identified himself with the lowliest of the low and denounced those who paraded pride in their caste. He said, *“Worthless is the caste and worthless an exalted name. For all mankind there is but a single refuge.”*<sup>312</sup> At the pain of excommunication he even declared openly that he would associate with the so-called low castes and not play a second fiddle to the affluent and socially pampered magnates.<sup>313</sup>

<sup>310</sup> ਹਮਾ ਦਰ ਯਕ ਮਜ਼ਹਬ ਰਾ ਆਇੰਦ ਕਿ ਦੁਈ ਅਜ਼ ਮਿਆਂ ਬਰਖੋਜ਼ਦ । ਵ ਹਰ ਚਹਾਰ ਵਰਨ ਕੌਮਿ ਹਨੂਦ ਅਜ਼ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਨ ਵ ਛਤਰੀ ਵ ਸੂਦਰ ਵ ਵੈਸ਼ ਕਿ ਹਰ ਯਕ ਰਾ ਦਰ-ਧਰਮ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਦੀਨੇ ਅਲਹਿਦਾ ਮੁਕੱਰਰ ਅਸਤ । ਅੰ ਰਾ ਤਰਕ ਦਾਦਹ ਵ ਬਰ ਯਕ ਤਰੀਕ ਸਲੂਕ ਨੁਮਾਇੰਦ ॥ (Secret report of Munshi Ghulam Muhay- ud-din to Aurangzeb, the Emperor of Delhi).

<sup>311</sup> Such has been the influence of Hinduism that the Indian Muslims, who are forbidden caste differences, became divided into castes like *Sayed, Mughal, Sheikh and Pathan* on the pattern of four vernas of Hinduism (A.K.Najmal “Changing Society in India and Pakistan”) At present there are 35 separate castes of Muslims alone in Bengal. In his book “Census of India” (page 380) Even Indian Christians could not escape it. Mr.J.H.Hutton writes, “Caste is admittedly observed by the Catholics while some Protestants, who prefer not to admit it, openly admit a ban on commensality.”

<sup>312</sup> ਫਕਤ ਜਾਤੀ ਫਕਤ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਇਕਾ ਛਾਉ ॥ ਆਪਹੁ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਭਲਾ ਕਹਾਏ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਪਰੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਜਾ ਪਤਿ ਲੇਖੇ ਪਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩) ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਊਚਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਨੀਚ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਕੋਇ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੧).

<sup>313</sup> ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ ॥ ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੮)

To give credence to his statements he befriended the so-called lowest caste Mardana all through his life.

To expose those who advanced the argument that in the next life God will offer better place to the higher castes, the Guru said that in the court of God neither caste nor power is of any value.<sup>314</sup> He dissociated caste from birth and said that the caste of a person should be associated with the person's deeds and not with his birth.<sup>315</sup> Fully stated his advice runs as follows: *“Do not be proud of your caste. Only those can claim to be superior who attune to God. You will be a fool to boast of your high caste because such claims result in many problems. Like a potter fashioning earthen pots in numerous shapes our father God has fashioned us from one and the same clay. All living beings are composed of five elements no one can prove any disparity between human constituents. Nanak says human beings are rewarded for their deeds and without the guidance of a true Guru, they do not stand to get the chance of being liberated from wrong notions.”*<sup>316</sup>

The Guru tolerated the profession-based tags but repudiated the social superiority or inferiority attached to professions. He said classification of caste should be based on deeds instead of profession or birth. A bad deed should bring bad name to the doer. For example “A greedy person is a dog; and a person full of falsehood should be called a filthy street sweeper (ਚੁਹੜਾ). Cheating (ਠੱਗੀ) is like eating a rotting carcass. Slandering (ਨਿੰਦਾ) of others is putting the filth of others into your own mouth (ਹਰਾਮ). The fire of anger is the outcaste (ਸੁਦਰ) who burns dead bodies at the crematorium”<sup>317</sup> According to the Gurus a man can be a tailor, a barber, a farmer, a carpenter, a cobbler and still be equal in social status with a Brahman whereas a Brahman who is doing evil deeds is lower in status than a God-fearing street-sweeper.

And the Brahmins who cheated others and in so doing sucked their blood were butchers.<sup>318</sup>

<sup>314</sup> ਅਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜੋਰੁ ਹੈ ਅਗੈ ਜੀਉ ਨਵੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੯) ਅਗੈ ਨਾਉ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਇਸੀ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਖਾਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੪)

<sup>315</sup> ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨਹ ਪੂਛੀਐ ਸਚ ਘਰੁ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਤਾਇ ॥ ਸਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਸਾ ਪਤਿ ਹੈ ਜੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੩੦)

<sup>316</sup> ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰੀਅਹੁ ਕੋਈ ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੭) ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨਹੀ ਦੀਸੈ ਆਖੀ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੫)

<sup>317</sup> ਲਬੁ ਕੁਤਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਚੁਹੜਾ ਠਗਿ ਖਾਧਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫), ਕੁਬੁਧਿ ਡੂਮਣੀ ਕੁਦਇਆ ਕਸਾਇਣਿ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਘਟ ਚੁਹੜੀ ਮੁਠੀ ਕਰੋਧਿ ਚੰਡਾਲਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧) False-mindedness is the drummer-woman (ਮਰਾਸਣ); cruelty is the butcheress; slander of others in one's heart is the cleaning-woman, and deceitful anger is the outcaste-woman.

<sup>318</sup> ਮਥੈ ਟਿਕਾ ਤੇਤਿ ਧੋਤੀ ਕਾਖਾਈ, ਹਥਿ ਫੁਰੀ ਜਗਤ ਕਾਸਾਈ- ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੧)

Entry into Sikhism was open to all from the time of Guru Nanak. Hymns of the writers from all castes appear in the Granth Sahib. After Guru Nanak and Guru Angad Dev, who enforced convivial dining through persuasion, Guru Amar Das specifically disallowed visitors unless they dined in his *Langar* sitting with all other castes. This compulsory commensality brought people of different castes together as equals. Later Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Ram Das also condemned caste. Bhai Gurdas mentions that the *Karah Parsad* offered by the so-called low castes and the outcastes was freely distributed to all irrespective of their castes.<sup>319</sup>

Mehma Parkash tells us that Guru Angad Dev treated all castes equally. Similarly Koer Singh tells us that Shudras and low-castes all ate together in the Guru's gatherings. Rattan Singh Bhangu clearly mentions that Ranghrettas (sweepers) were treated by Guru Gobind Singh in the same way as the other castes.<sup>320</sup> *Amrit* (baptism) was not denied to anybody by Guru Gobind Singh. His five beloved ones all came from the so-called low castes. They even included a low caste barber and a washer man who were socially ostracized in those days. Kesar Singh Chhibber writes that the Khalsa obliterated the distinctions of caste and inter-married. Bhai Dya Singh's *Rehat Nama* states that Guru Gobind Singh strictly forbade the mention of caste.<sup>321</sup>

Discrimination and social stratification on the basis of vertical relationships was unacceptable to the Gurus. They did not accept vertical caste divisions with Brahman at the apex of the pyramid-down to sweepers and leather-workers. This explains why there are not many Brahman Sikhs in the Khalsa brotherhood. However they tolerated horizontal links of castes, which were unjustifiably and wrongly associated with professions. Professions in India have always had long ancestral links. If a person followed the profession of his forefathers he would become an expert in that profession or trade. Unfortunately when it came to matrimonial alliances the people always sought the best person in

<sup>319</sup> Bhai Gurdas has criticised caste at various places in his vars. Read ਵਾਰ ੩(ਪਉੜੀ ੧੬), ਵਾਰ ੫ (ਪ:੧), ਵਾਰ ੫ (ਪ:੯), ਵਾਰ ੯(ਪ:੧), ਵਾਰ ੧੨(ਪ: ੧੩), ਵਾਰ ੧੨(ਪ:੧੭), ਵਾਰ ੧੮ (ਪ:੧੪), ਵਾਰ ੧ (ਪ: ੩੧ ਤੋ ੫੪), ਵਾਰ ੨੪ (ਪ:੪) ਵਾਰ ੨੯ (ਪ:੫)

<sup>320</sup> ਜੋਟ ਬੂਟ ਕਹਿ ਜੇ ਜੋਗ ਮਾਹੀ ॥ ਬਨੀਏ ਬਕਾਲ ਕਿਰਾਤ ਖੜ੍ਹੀ ਸਦਾਈ ॥ ਲੁਹਾਰ ਤਰਖਾਣ ਹੁਤ ਜਾਤ ਕਮੀਨੀ, ਛੀਪੇ ਕਲਾਲ ਨੀਚਨ ਪੈ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕੀਨੀ ॥ ਗੁਜਰ ਗਵਾਰ ਅਹੀਰ ਕਮਜ਼ਾਤ ॥ ਕੰਬੋਇ ਸੂਦਰ ਕੋਇ ਪੁਛੇ ਨਾ ਬਾਤ, ਝੀਵਰ ਨਾਈ ਰੋੜੇ ਘੁਮਿਆਰ ॥ ਸੈਣੀ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੇ ਚੂੜੇ ਚਮਿਆਰ ॥ ਇਨ ਗਰੀਬ ਸਿਖਨ ਕਉ ਦੇਉ ਪਾਤਸਾਹੀ, ਇਹ ਯਾਦ ਕਰੋ ਹਮਰੀ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ॥ (ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ)  
See also Panth Parkash by Giani Gian Singh.

<sup>321</sup> ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੋ ਪਾਨੀ ਕਹੈ ਸਿਖ ਕੀ ਪੁਛੇ ਜਾਤ । ਦਇਆ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਮ ਸਿਖ ਨਹੀ ਜਨਮ ਗਵਾਵੈ ਬਾਦ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਇਆ ਸਿੰਘ)

their professions to keep the expertise going and to ensure good standard of living for their children. This resulted in prolonging the profession-based caste system and is still the cause of its existence. However for the Sikhs such caste phenomena are not the cause of social ostracism and hatred.

Since the Hindu Shastras preached caste discrimination, the Sikh Gurus rejected the Hindu scripture and the Hindu gods.<sup>322</sup> In the Guru's concept of religion there was no place for the so-called four *Varnas*. The prince and the pauper became one and came to be regarded with equal respect.

## 10.2 Caste today

Patterns of connubium, patriarchal values and social structures take a long time to change. Such is the impact of caste in India that even in our own times it openly exists everywhere.<sup>323</sup> The prominent Hindu reformer Vivekananda once said, "If untouchability lives, Hinduism will die." Mahatma Gandhi<sup>324</sup> too condemned it but the malady still persists in spite of the efforts of our national Government in curbing all sorts of discrimination and bias. Connubium and commensality restrictions that we see today are especially noticeable in the villages. It is a heritage from the remotest past social customs, which had gone deep into the psyche of the village people. Other reasons for their survival are conservative Hindu influence, lack of education and inertia.

---

<sup>322</sup> ਮਹਿਮਾ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਵੇਦ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪), ਭਰਮੇ ਸੁਰ ਨਰ ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫੮), ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਤੈ ਗੁਣ ਭੁਲੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੫੨)

<sup>323</sup> "ਸਰਬਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਧਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਮਾਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਗਤ ਪੰਗਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਕੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ, ਪਿਛਲੀ ਜਾਤ ਪਾਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੁਛਣੀ, ਭਰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ। ਇਹੋ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੋ ਸਿਰ ਨਿਵਾਏਗਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਉਸਦੀ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਕਰਨਗੇ"॥ (ਹੁਕਨਾਮਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਮਿਤੀ ੧੩ ਜੂਨ ੧੯੩੬)

<sup>324</sup> Mahatma Gandhi simply gave a new name to the low castes. He called them "Harijan". He neither attacked the Hindu scripture, which sanctioned caste nor campaigned to admit low caste in Hindu Temples much less dining with them or entering into matrimonial alliances. Harijan is still considered a low caste.

### 10.3 The Gurus accused

A question is usually raised as to why were all the Gurus married only in the Khatri castes in spite of their opposition to caste prejudices? *“It should be remembered that the Gurus arranged marriages of their own children which were in complete conformity with traditional caste prescription. Does it not follow therefore that their strictures on caste have been partially misunderstood?”* (‘The Sikhs’ by McLeod page 81).<sup>325</sup>

The answer to this question should be clear from the foregoing discussion. Any attempt by the Guru to discredit the current Hindu dogmas would have resulted in arresting the progress of the Sikh Movement.<sup>326</sup> The aim was to strengthen the movement, which would in turn automatically obliterate caste prejudices.

It is also a fact that the Sikh Gurus did not oppose inter-caste marriages. There is no evidence to show that Guru Nanak, or the later Sikh Gurus at any time objected to inter-caste marriages but they themselves did not take any such steps because this would have affected their movement adversely and sounded its death knell at the very start. It was far more important to organise people for a fight against religious and political oppression and persecution than to invite unnecessary criticism of caste dilution. People were being pulverised between the two stools of exploitation by the religious elite and the persecution by the political stalwarts. It was the attack on these maladies that became the recruiting ground for the Sikhs. It was understood that once people join to oppose these two enemies their caste-endogamy, caste-status and ritualistic barriers would automatically fade away in the course of time.

Secondly the system of contracting matrimonial alliances in the Guru’s time left very little for the parents (much less for the individuals) to decide. Intermediaries known as *Wicholas* (usually barbers) were the key figures to decide matrimonial alliances. The story of Guru Hargobind’s betrothal demonstrates how the intermediaries (*Wicholas*) contracted matrimonial alliances. These *Wicholas* were usually Hindus in thought

---

<sup>325</sup> “He jests at scars who hasn’t felt a wound” (Shakespeare). McLeod does not know how caste was enforced and to what extent it had devastated the Indian Society. It may take generations for the crows to become white.

<sup>326</sup> “Never can true reconciliation grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep” (Milton in Paradise lost)

and belief and could not think of breaking the caste prejudices without inviting problems.

It should also be kept in mind that the first four Gurus were already married before they became Gurus. At the time of the fifth Guru political situation changed suddenly leading to Guru Arjan's martyrdom and Guru Har Gobind's battles. There was no time for social reform when even their lives were at stake. The situation improved only for a few years and then again worsened with the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Later Guru Gobind Singh thought out a novel plan to strike at the root of the disease and succeeded to a large extent. All his five Pyaras were from the so-called lower classes. He demonstrably accepted *Amrit* from them.

It is easy to find fault with Sikhism but the fact remains that caste had gone too deep into the Indian psyche. Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century India legislation is proving fruitless to curb it.

## 10.4 Contribution of Sikhism

There is no denying the fact that the spirit of social equality and brotherhood that exists in the Panjab and its contiguous areas today is the result of the reinforcement of Sikh ideals by the Khalsa. It is also a fact that the Khalsa drew leaders from all sections of Society including the so-called low castes and outcastes. Caste prejudices were abolished as far as commensality was concerned and by doing so the Sikh revolution raised the social status of the so-called lower classes. There is no denying the fact that even though caste differences persist, the Sikh society is much more liberal and egalitarian than the prevalent Hindu social order of modern India.

*"It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay the broad foundations which enabled his successor Govind to fire the minds of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes."* (J.D Cunningham 'A history of the Sikhs' Page 34)

*He (Guru Nanak) was the essence of humility. He preached with vehemence against idolatry, hypocrisy and distinctions of castes and creeds, but in so doing he never uttered a word, which savoured of personal ambition, neither did he arrogate to himself the attributes of God.* (Glimpses of world religion)

## 10.5 Gotras

*Gotras* are tribal associations.<sup>327</sup> At one time groups or tribes of people fighting with each other created congeries of small states or principalities, which dominated the society. Usually the leaders' name was given to the group, which in course of time began to be called a *Gotra*. For example Sidhu s/o Khiwa Rao was the founder of Sidhu Gotra.<sup>328</sup> In his tenth generation appeared Brar s/o Hameera who was a great warrior and had defeated Muhammad Tughlak.<sup>329</sup> Those who joined his group began to be called Brar. Maan Gotra came to be known after the name of Raja Binopal's grandson Manpal, who founded the town of Mansa. Randhawas are the descendants of the ninth son of Rai Jundhar whereas Chhinas are the descendants of his eleventh son. Rais are descendants of Tulsi Das's son Rai. Bajwas descend from Shilkap's son Kals who was known as Bajanwala because he used to rear falcons (Baj)<sup>330</sup>. These leaders attracted people of all professions and castes into their groups. Therefore it is not uncommon to find so many castes professing the same Gotra. For example Cheemas are jats, barbers and even Muslims. Gills are jats, carpenters and Mazhabi Sikhs. Dhillons are Jats, carpenters and barbers.

Some people have confused Gotra with caste. Gotra has nothing to do with caste. Caste (*Zat*) is endogamous (includes different *Gotras*) but *Gotra* is exogamous (excludes people of other *Gotras* although of the same caste). The Panjabi jats have more than a hundred *gotras* but only one caste (Jat).

Sometimes people who distinguished themselves in religious or other fields also lent their names to tribes as *Gotras*.<sup>331</sup> For example Bhai Mansukh was a devoted Sikh of Guru Nanak. He went to Ceylon to preach Sikhism. Now we have the word Mansukhani used as a Gotra by his descendants. It is said that Mehmood Gazhnavi captured a Surjvanshi Rajpoot man and took him away to Ghazni as a slave. The man was a good warrior and runner who could run for miles without getting out of breath.

<sup>327</sup> ਕੁਲ. ਵੰਸ਼, ਖਾਨਦਾਨ (ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੮)

<sup>328</sup> See Tawirkh Rajgan Panjab Page 13

<sup>329</sup> See Twarikh Raj Khalsa page 123

<sup>330</sup> Bajwas descended from Baju Rajpoots of Jaisalmer. Baba Manga was the first to move to the Panjab and settle at Bajwat (District Sialkot-Pakistan. His descendant Shilkap (also known as Raja Sahib) ruled in Multan. Sikander Lodhi drove him out of Multan. He had two sons Kals and Les. Kals escaped in the guise of a falconer and Les was killed. Pakistani Bajwas live in Sialkot and Narowal and those in India live in District Gurdaspur settled around Dera Baba Nanak.

<sup>331</sup> Vedis are said to have descended from those who memorised the Vedas.

He escaped from Ghazni, ran back to the Panjab, and settled on the banks of river Ravi. After his accomplishment he and his group came to be known as *Sahi* (long breather). Now this marvellous quality attached with his name is used as a Gotra. Hari Singh Nalwa came to be called Nalwa because he killed a lion.<sup>332</sup> Ramgarhia is not a caste or a *gotra* but Jassa Singh came to be known as Ramgarhia because of his association with the fort of Ram Rauni (later Ram Garh).

Sometimes place names are adopted as Gotras An important personality popularises the name of a place, which later becomes a Gotra. Sham Singh was Sidhu by gotra but came to be known as Sham Singh Attari because he founded the village of Attari. Now 'Attariwala' is used as a Gotra. Ahluwalia (or Walia) *Gotra* started with Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia who belonged to village Ahluwal. Partap Singh Kairon was a Dhillon Jat of village Kairon but now his descendants use Kairon as Gotra after their names. Parkash Singh Badal belongs to village Badal and now his son and other descendants call themselves Badal. Sant Sunder Singh lived in village Bhinder and came to be known as Bhindranwale. His descendant Sant Jarnail Singh came to be known as Bhindranwala even though he had no connection with village Bhindran. Rara is a village but we know about Sant Ishar Singh Rarewale and Gian Singh Rarewala.

There are villages and towns founded by different Gotras and people use the name of the village after their names irrespective of their real Gotra. For example Sidhwan (from Sidhu), Sivian (from Sivia), Chak Bhatian (from Bhati), Lalian (from Lalli), and Sohian (from Sohi). Chahal, Gill, Khanna, Goraya, Ghuman, Sanghera, Dhilwan, Cheema, Kang, Hayer, Sandhwan etc are all the names of the villages in the Panjab where people of these Gotras originally settled or established their small areas of influence. Many people use the name of their village with their names rather than their Gotra. In course of time the same becomes their Gotra. 'Nehru' was not a Gotra but a place name.

---

<sup>332</sup> Hari Singh (1791- 1837AD) son of Sardar Gurdial Singh of Gujranwala joined Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army in 1805 AD as an ordinary soldier. In 1710 he accompanied the Maharaja on a hunting trip. A lion unexpectedly attacked him. Hari Singh held the lion by his jaws and threw him on the ground. Before the lion could get up he drew his sword and decapitated it. The Maharaja was so pleased with his bravery that he appointed him as his own bodyguard and later appointed him the Commander of Sherdil Regiment, which had 800 horsemen. Hari Singh later became the world-famous general and one of the strongest pillars of the Khalsa Raj. He became famous as *Nalwa* (the brave, the lion killer).



The Indian society of the Guru's time was strongly hierarchical. Each *Gotra* of a particular *Zat* (caste) had some *Gotras* preferred for matrimonial alliances and some others even banned.<sup>333</sup> The Sikh Gurus denounced the privileges or the deprivations attached to hierarchical patterns. No discrimination was made in appointing *Masands* (preachers) from various castes and *Gotras*.

Castes and *Gotras* have both found mention in the Guru Granth Sahib but they are not used derogatively.<sup>334</sup> They have also been extensively used by Bhai Gurdas in his *Vars* with the names of Guru Nanak's followers.<sup>335</sup> *Janam Sakhis* too used *Gotras* and *Zats*. Guru Nanak's discussion with Ajita *Randhawa* is very popular. In Bachittar Natak we find "Guru Nanak was born in the *Bedi* clan".<sup>336</sup> [

What the Gurus condemned was not the profession-based caste or the *Gotra* but the discrimination attached to them and their association with birth. The castes attached to professions cannot be obliterated. We cannot call the barbers, farmers, teachers, weavers, and cobblers by other names and still identify their professions. Whatever other names are given to them, the other names will still betray their profession. The Sikh Gurus nowhere wrote that the Sikhs should not use *Gotras* and *Zats* (castes). Those who attribute this to Sikhism are unintentionally trying to introduce their own prejudices into Sikhism. What the Gurus preached was the abolition of a person's *Zat's* (caste's) association with his/her birth and the hatred due to such labels. According to Sikhism no one is inferior or superior because of one's caste, profession or *Gotra*.

<sup>333</sup> People still say "ਸਿਧੂ ਸੰਧੂ ਇਕੋ ਜਿਹੇ ਗਿੱਲ ਜ਼ਰਾ ਉਚੇਰੇ"

<sup>334</sup> (1) ਨਾਮਾ ਛੀਬਾ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਜੋਲਾਹਾ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੭) ਨਾਮਾ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਸਭਿ ਦੇਖ ਗਏ ਚਮਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੯੫) ਨਾਮਾ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਅਉਜਾਤਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਚਮਿਆਰੁ ਚਮਈਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩੫) (੨) ਭਲੇ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਉਪਮਾ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਨਿ ਆਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੯੬) ਲਹਣੈ ਪੰਥੁ ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਭਲੇ ਕਉ ਦੀਆ ॥ ਤਿਨਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੁ ਸੋਢੀ ਬਿਰੁ ਬਪੁਉ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧੈ ਨਿਧਿ ਅਪੁਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੧)

<sup>335</sup> Bhai Gurdas gives us names of Guru Nanak's devotees in War 11 Pauri 14 and the names of Guru Angad Dev's devotees in War 11 Pauri 15. He frequently mentions their castes and *gotras*. For example ਮੈਲਸੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਖੀਐ ਗੱਜਣ ਉਪਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਾਵੈ । ਜਿੱਤਾ ਰੰਧਾਵਾ ਭਲਾ ਬੂੜਾ ਬੁੱਢਾ ਇਕ ਮਨ ਧਿਆਵੈ । ਫਿਰਣਾ ਖਹਿਰਾ ਜੋਧ ਸਿੱਖ ਜੀਵਾਈ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਵੈ । ਗੁਜਰ ਜਾਤ ਲੋਹਾਰ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਗੁਰਿਸਿੱਖ ਸੁਨਾਵੈ । (ਵਾਰ ੧੧ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੫) ਸੁਣਿ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਕਬੀਰ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਸਿਖ ਹੋਆ ਸੋਣ ਨਾਈ (ਭ: ਗੁ ੧੦.੧੬) ਭਗਤੁ ਭਗਤੁ ਜਗਿ ਵਜਿਆ ਚਹੁ ਚੱਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਚਮਿਰੇਟਾ (ਭ: ਗੁ ੧੦.੧੭) ਗੋਤ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਗਸੋਧ ਕੇ ਪੜੈ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਭਾਈ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੭ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੫).

<sup>336</sup> ਤਿਨ ਬੇਦੀਅਨ ਕੀ ਕੁਲ ਵਿਖੇ ਪਰਗਟੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਏ (ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

## Chapter Eleven

### Sikh to Khalsa

The words ‘Sikh’ and ‘Singh’ have been in use in India since the seventh century but their meanings have changed a lot over time. The word ‘Khalsa’ appears to have come into use only after the twelfth century with the coming of the Muslims.

#### 11.1 Sikh

‘Sikh’ is a word of the “Pali” language and was extensively used in ancient Buddhist literature for a person who is perfect.<sup>337</sup> Some scholars think that it is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘*Shishya*’, which means ‘a learner, a follower or a student’. It was commonly used in the religious parlance in the sense of a follower. For example we read, “Influenced by the glorious reputation of Kabir the second person to become his **Sikh** was Sain, the barber”.<sup>338</sup> In the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> cantos of his Var 11 Bhai Gurdas has listed a number of people as the Sikhs of Guru Nanak.<sup>339</sup> The people mentioned by Bhai Gurdas were not ordinary people who assembled to listen to the Guru and yet did not accept his philosophy of life. They were completely drenched in the Guru’s philosophy and followed his advice in all matters. Some such Sikhs were later appointed *Masands* by Guru Amar Das on the basis of their spiritual achievements.<sup>340</sup> Also it should be noted that there was no distinction of caste, colour, or social status among followers of the Gurus. All followers, especially the *Masands*, preached Sikhism and collected funds for the Guru’s movement.

<sup>337</sup> ਸਿਖੋ ਪਥਵਿਮ ਵੁਜਾਅਸਥੀ ਯਮਲੋਕਮ ਤ ਇਵਾ ਸਦੇਵਕਮ ॥ ਸਿਖੋ ਕੁਸਲੋਪੁਫਮ ਇਵਾ ਪਚਸਤੀ (ਧਮਪਦਮ). The word was also used as ਸੇਖਾ meaning The elite.

<sup>338</sup> , “ਸੁਣਿ ਪਰਤਾਪੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਸਿਖ ਹੋਆ ਸੈਣ ਨਾਈ” They were both followers of Bhagat Rama Nand.

<sup>339</sup> ਫਿਰਣਾ ਖਹਿਰਾ ਜੋਧ ਸਿਖ ਜੀਵਾਈ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਵੈ, ਗੁਜਰ ਜਾਤ ਲੁਹਾਰ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਗੁਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ

<sup>340</sup> Those who started coming to the Guru simply on persuasion but were not fully committed to the Guru’s philosophy were called “*Sehlang*” (ਸਹਿਲੰਗ). ਸੋਮਣ ਹੈ ਸਾਹਬਾਜਪੁਰ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਰ ਲਹੰਦਾ, ਜੋਧਾ ਜਲੋ ਤੁਲਸਪੁਰ ਮੋਹਣ ਆਲਮਗੀਜ ਰਹੰਦਾ। ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਵੱਡਿਆਂ ਵੱਡੇ ਮਸੰਦਾ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ੧੧/੨੨) By the time of Guru Gobind Singh the *Masands* had become corrupt and were a drag on the movement so Guru Gobind Singh had to discontinue the appointment of the *Masands* in 1698 AD

Guru Amar Das gave the first definition of a Sikh when he wrote *“Renouncing selfishness and conceit, he remains always on the side of the Guru; he does not follow anyone except the Guru. Says Nanak, listen, O Saints: such a Sikh turns toward the Guru with sincere faith, and becomes Sunmukh (blessed).”*<sup>341</sup>

*“He alone is a Sikh, a friend, a relative and a sibling, who walks in the Way of the Guru’s Will. One who walks according to his own will, O Siblings of Destiny, suffers separation from the Lord, and shall degenerate.” (M3 Page 601)*<sup>342</sup>

*“One who calls himself a Sikh of the True Guru, shall rise in the early morning hours and meditate on the Lord’s Name.” (M4 page 305)*<sup>343</sup>

*“Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who humbly submits to the Guru’s instruction. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who with his tongue utters the Name of the Lord. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, whose mind, upon hearing the Lord’s Name, becomes blissful. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who acts upon the advice of the True Guru, and so obtains the Lord’s Name. I bow forever in deepest respect to that Sikh who practises what the Guru preaches.” (AGGS Page 593)*<sup>344</sup>.

Obviously a Sikh is somebody who keeps God in mind at all times, renounces his self-conceit, and acts according to the Guru’s instruction. His submission to the Guru elevates him to spiritual bliss.

---

<sup>341</sup> ਆਪ ਛੱਡ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੈ ਪਰਣੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਏ। ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਹੋਏ” (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੦)

<sup>342</sup> ਸੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਖਾ ਬੰਧੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵੈ, ਆਪਣੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਜੋ ਚਲੈ ਭਾਈ ਵਿਛੜਿ ਚੋਟਾ ਖਾਵੈ (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦੧)

<sup>343</sup> ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ..... (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੫)

<sup>344</sup> ਧੰਨ ਧੰਨ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਚਰਣੀ ਜਾਇ ਪਇਆ..... (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੩)

## 11.2 Singh

It is generally believed that when Guru Gobind Singh initiated his Sikhs in 1699 AD he invented the words “Singh” and “Khalsa”. The word “Khalsa” was assigned to the baptised Sikhs who became “Singhs” after partaking baptism<sup>345</sup> of the sword. The fact however remains that the word “Singh” (lion) was current among the people of India much earlier than the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The Buddhists had used it in their scripture and the Rajputs had used it after their names. For example King Akbar’s brother-in-law (maternal uncle of Jehangir) was Raja Maan Singh, whose sister Jodha Bai, was Akbar’s wife. Guru Gobind Singh simply reserved its use for the baptised Sikhs who repudiated caste system, opted to take *Pahul* and regularly practised Sikhism in their daily lives. Today the usage of “Singh” after people’s names is not a reflection of their true commitment to the Guru’s way but an extant tradition. Such people go to the Sikh religious gatherings but they are not truly “Singhs” in the real sense of the term “Singh” unless they are awakened by Gurbani and make a sincere public commitment to the Guru by getting baptised.

## 11.3 Khalsa

The word “*Khalsa*” is derived from the Arabic word “*Khalas*” which means pure (without adulteration). Bhagat Kabir used this word as such for people “pure at heart” and devoted to God. He wrote, “Kabir says that those who delved into Divine love are the Purest of the pure.”<sup>346</sup> Bhagat Ravi Das used it in the sense of spiritual purification when he wrote, “The purified cobbler Ravi Das says this”<sup>347</sup>

---

<sup>345</sup> This word (baptism) has different connotations in Christianity. It has been used here for *Amrit Sanchar ceremony* of the Sikhs for convenience only because no other suitable equivalent is available in English.

<sup>346</sup> “ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਜਨ ਭਏ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤ ਜਿਹ ਜਾਨੀ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੪)

<sup>347</sup> “ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਖਲਾਸ ਚਮਾਰਾ” ॥ “ਜਿਨਕੋ ਸਾਧੂ ਭੇਟੀਐ ਸੋ ਦਰਗਹ ਹੋਇ ਖਲਾਸੁ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪)

Dadu<sup>348</sup> *Panthis* and *Bairagis* also used this word for their institutions. Some of their *Akharas* (Institutions) were known as Bhai Khalsa, Nirmohi Khalsa, Nirbani Khalsa and Niranjni Khalsa etc. Later Guru Arjan Dev used this word when he wrote, “*Those who join the company of the Saints, get purified and enter God’s court as emancipated men*”.<sup>349</sup>

The word “*Khalsa*” was commonly used by the Mughals before the time of Guru Har Gobind for any properties that belonged directly to the king. We still come across villages like Dera Khalsa, Thoha Khalsa, Choha Khalsa, and Paddi Khalsa, which once belonged to the kings as their personal properties. Guru Har Gobind used the word in this sense in one of his *Hukam Namas*<sup>350</sup> and wrote, “The holy congregation of the East, is the Guru’s Khalsa”. These *Hukam Namas* contained lists of names prior to the use of this word “*Khalsa*”.<sup>351</sup> Obviously not everybody was “*Khalsa*”. This indicates that only those who towed the Guru’s line were termed Khalsa.

Guru Tegh Bahadur used the word exactly in the same sense when he wrote to the Holy congregation of Patna.<sup>352</sup>

Even before the Baisakhi event of 1699AD Guru Gobind Singh called his devoted Sikhs ‘Khalsa’. For example in his *Hukam Nama* written to Kalyan Rai and *Sangat* of Machhiwara in 1698 AD he writes, “The congregation is my Khalsa”(ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੈ 1). This means that even before *Amrit Sanchar* the Guru chose very trustworthy people who would lay down their lives for him and it was an honour for such chosen followers to be called ‘Khalsa’.

<sup>348</sup> Dadu (1544-1603 AD) son of Lodhi Ram Nagar was born in Ahmedabad in a Muslim family. At the age of eleven he became the follower of Pandit Bodhan. He preached his faith in Rajasthan and was known as Dadu Dyal (Dadu the merciful)

<sup>350</sup> ਪੂਰਬ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋਇ...”(ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਮੇ - ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫) Guru Har Gobind issued this *Hukanama* at the time of creating the Akal Takhat. One *Hukam Nama* of Baba Gurdita (son of Guru Hargobind) is also available. *Hukam Namas* have been published by Sardar Ganda Singh. Later Sardar Shamsheer Singh Ashok published them through the SGPC in 1967 naming them “*Nishan te Hukamnamey*”.

<sup>351</sup> For example “ਭਾਈ ਜਾਪੂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਭਾਈ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ ਭਾਈ ਜਾਤੀ ਭਾਈ ਦਿਆਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ.....” The same practice was later followed by Guru Gobind Singh “ਭਾਈ ਮਿਹਰਚੰਦ ਧਰਮ ਚੰਦ ਕਰਮ ਚੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਖੇਗਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ ਜਨਮ ਸਚਿਰੇਗਾ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋ ” (ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਮੇ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬)

<sup>352</sup> “ਪਟਣ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀਉ ਦਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੈ” .....(ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਮੇ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭) or “ਪੂਰਬ ਦੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋਇ” .....( ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਮਾ ਨੰ:੨੩)

It is therefore clear that Guru Gobind Singh used the word Khalsa to denote all those trustworthy Sikhs who pledged their heads to him and promised to lay down their lives when required. Later the word was reserved for the baptised Sikhs who had openly pledged their allegiance to the Guru and offered their heads at the *Amrit Sanchar* ceremony of 1699 AD.

These baptised Sikhs were deeply devoted to the Guru and believed in no other deity except God.<sup>353</sup> The Guru is reported to have said that he was merging his soul in the Khalsa.<sup>354</sup> The Khalsa's life, therefore, was not their own but the property of the Sire (Guru Gobind Singh) whom they always called *Sacha Patshah* (The real ruler).

Even after the *Amrit Sanchar* ceremony only the most trustworthy and spiritually advanced close associates of the Guru were called the Khalsa. For example see *Hukam Nama* No. 83 (1702 AD) written to Mehar Chand and *Hukam Nama* No. 86 written to Mehar Chand and Karam Chand in 1701 AD. Although not baptised they are called Khalsa.

After the demise of Guru Gobind Singh Matta Sundri and Matta Sahib Kaur wrote letters to their followers exactly in the same fashion by mentioning their names but made a very significant change in their *Hukam Namas*. They never wrote “ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋ”। Instead after the list of the devotees' names or some times even before it they wrote,

“ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ” ਵਾਸੀ ਪਟਨੇ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਖੇਗਾ (ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਾ ਨੰ ੯੮ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ 1722 AD)

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮਾਤਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਹੈ...” (ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮੇ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬).

This testifies to the fact that the Khalsa always belonged to *Akal Purkh* (God) pledging their devotion to Him through the Guru's word (Shabad).

Letters written by Baba Banda Bahadur are also written in the same style. For example read the letter dated 12 Poh (December) 1710 AD and now in the possession of Delhi Gurdwara Parabandhak Committee.<sup>355</sup>

<sup>353</sup> “ਪੂਰਨ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗੈ ਘਟ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸ ਤਾਹਿ ਨਖਾਲਸ ਜਾਨੈ”॥

<sup>354</sup> “ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਗੁਰੂ॥ ਅਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਐਸੀ ਬਿਧ ਸੁਰੂ॥ ਆਪਨੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਬਿਖੈ ॥ ਹਮ ਨੇ ਧਰੀ ਸਗਲ ਜਗ ਪਿਖੈ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸੂਰਜ ਰੁਤ ੨ ਅੰ ੨੩). ਗੁਰ ਬੂਝੈ ਪੁਨ ਆਪ ਕੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਹੋਤ ਕਿ ਨਾਹ ॥ ਬੋਲੇ ਹਉ ਬਨ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਵਰਤੋਗੇ ਸਭ ਮਾਹਿ (ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ.ਸੂਰਜ ਰੁਤ ੫ ਅੰ ੩੨) ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸੋਈ ਜੋ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਉਂ ਜੋੜੈ ॥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸੋਈ ਜੋ ਬੰਧਨ ਤੋੜੈ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਜੀ)

<sup>355</sup> ੴ ਫਤੇਹ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ । ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਸਰਬਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜਉਨਪੁਰ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਖੇਗਾ । ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ ਜਨਮ

When we pray and say, “ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਰਛਿਆ ਰਿਆਇਤ॥ ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ” we mean wherever Guru Nanak’s Panth (all devoted and dedicated followers whether baptised or un-baptised) live they should enjoy the protection of the Khalsa among them. The Panth (The followers of the path delineated by Guru Nanak) should flourish everywhere.

Bhai Gurdas (second) was of the opinion that the Guru turned the members of his Holy congregation into the Khalsa but woe betides us if we still remain *Manmukh*.<sup>356</sup>

According to Gupta, the word *Khalsa* (the followers of the Sikh Gurus) is composed of five meaningful words of Persio-Arabic script

<i>Khe</i> stands for Khud	(independence of spirit)
<i>Alif</i> stands for Allah (Akal Purkh)	(staunch belief in God)
<i>Lam</i> stands for Labaik	(open expression of faith)
<i>Sawd</i> stands for Sahib	( <i>Meeri</i> -secular authority)
<i>He</i> stands for <i>huma</i> <sup>357</sup> -	( <i>Peeri</i> means spiritual sovereignty)

During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the term started losing its original significance. The word began to be used for Khalsa Army and Khalsa Raj etc, which included Muslim, Italian, and Christian Generals not devoted to the Sikh philosophy. Today the dedication to the Guru and the Shabad is nearly missing. These days many Sikhs are observing many rituals hated and rejected by the Sikh Gurus and yet call themselves Khalsa.

---

ਸਵਰਗਾ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋ, ਪੰਜ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਬੰਨਿ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਆਵਣਾ.....”

<sup>356</sup> ਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਤ ਕੀਨੀ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਨਮੁਖੀ ਦੁਹੇਲਾ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੂਸਰਾ)

<sup>357</sup> *Huma* is a legendary bird. It is believed that if it flies over somebody’s head, that somebody gets crowned as king.

## 11.4 Gur Matta

A *GurMatta* is a resolution passed unanimously by a Sikh gathering in the presence of *Guru Granth Sahib*, sanctified by performing an *Ardas* and accepted with the shout of a *Jaikara*. It has an ethical base and once passed is considered to be the direction given by the Guru. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes in his magnum opus, the *Mahan Kosh* that upholding the *GurMatta* is a bounden duty of all Sikhs and anybody who disobeys it commits a sacrilege and becomes a *Tankhaya* (violation or defaulter).<sup>358</sup>

The word *GurMatta* came into use after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh to express and propagate the decisions taken democratically by the congregation. Unfortunately the word cannot be translated exactly into English. The word “Resolution,” which is usually substituted for it, is inadequate to demonstrate the spirit and the sanctity behind a *GurMatta*. A resolution is a *Matta* (ਮਤਾ) not a *GurMatta*. It was the practice of the Sikhs of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to seek the sanction of the congregation before embarking on any errand. A number of *Gur Mattas* of the period between 1716-1763 AD are available

Writing about the *Gur Mattas* Colonel Poliers states, “*All chiefs, great and small and even the poorest and the most abject Siques (Sikhs) look on themselves as perfectly equal in all public concerns and in the greatest Council or in GurMatta.*”<sup>359</sup> *Gathered thus they would say, the sacred Guru Granth Sahib is between us, let us swear by our scripture to forget all internal disputes and be united.*”<sup>360</sup>

---

<sup>358</sup> ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਲਾਹ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਦੀ ਸੰਮਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਉਂ “ਗੁਰਮਤਾ” ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ । ਜੋ ਗੁਰਮਤੇ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਕੋਈ ਕਰਮ ਕਰੇ ਉਹ ਤਨਖਾਹੀਆਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ । ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੇ ਗੁਰਮਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਬੁੰਗੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਲੇ ਮਹੱਲੇ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤਖਤ ਕੇਸਗੜ੍ਹ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਗੁਰਮਤੇ ਲਈ ਵੈਰ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਦੂਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠਿਆਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ । (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੦-੪੨੧)

<sup>359</sup> Perhaps he means “Sarbat Khalsa”, the gathering of Sikhs.

<sup>360</sup> ਕਾਮ ਪਰਤ ਥਾ ਜੋ ਕਛੁ ਕਬ ਹੀ, ਕਰਤ ਗੁਰਮਤਾ ਮਿਲ ਕਰ ਸਭ ਹੀ ॥ ਜਤੋਦਾਰ ਜੀ ਜੋ ਕਹਿ ਦੇਤਾ, ਸੋਈ ਪੰਥ ਮਾਨ ਸਭ ਲੇਤਾ ॥  
ਤਨ ਮਨ ਧਨ ਸਭ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਲਖਤੇ, ਦਾਈਆਂ ਸੀਸ ਦੇਣ ਕਉ ਰਖਤੇ ॥ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ )



“For a *GurMatta* only those subjects can be taken up which are calculated to clarify and support the fundamental principles of Sikhism; such as safeguarding the position of the *Gurus* and the Holy *Granth Sahib*, purity of the ritual and the Panthic organisation.”(*Sikh Rehat Maryada* SGPC Amritsar 1978 Page 23) Five baptised Sikhs constituted a religious council and temporarily represented the body of the Guru to issue directions in a particular situation.<sup>361</sup>

Their decision was considered to have the sanction and the authority of the Guru. When the different *Jathas* grew bigger into *Misls* they felt the need to chalk out a consistent common policy. They would discuss the matter among the leaders and then present it to the council of the five. The council would then ratify the decision in the presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, announce it and call it a *GurMatta*, which the present members of the congregation passed with a loud *Jaikara*. It was the corporate aspect of the *GurMatta*, which acted as a cement to keep the *Panth* united and active during the 18<sup>th</sup> century trials and tribulations when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded everywhere. It led to the cohesion of the Khalsa, resolution of internecine problems and also to a clear-cut political policy of the Sikhs. Thus the *GurMatta* was instrumental in maintaining the unity of thought and organisation among the different *Misls* and saved the Sikhs from disintegration at the worst period of their history.

To an outsider it appeared that the Sikhs were divided into twelve different confederacies engaged in internecine skirmishes but in reality they had joined together to give a practical shape to the aspirations and ideals of the Khalsa. Although religion always remained the guiding principle, the Sikh *Gur Mattas* covered a vast canvas of religion, politics, morality, and social justice. If the matter did not concern Sikhism and its principles then only a *Matta* was necessary. A *Matta* was not considered sacred and inviolable.

When Maharaja Ranjit Singh carved out a state, he obliterated the *GurMatta* system in 1809A D and assumed all control over religious, political and diplomatic activities of the Panth. This proved disastrous. There is no doubt that he was punctilious in worship and never missed

---

<sup>361</sup> ਇਕੁ ਸਿਖ ਦੁਇ ਸਾਧਸੰਗੁ ਪੰਜੀਂ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੧੩)

daily readings of the Granth Sahib, but it is also true that he introduced Hindu elements in Sikhism by celebrating Hindu festivals, visiting Hindu holy places and offering personal financial help to Hindu temples. Such was the influence of Hinduism on him that on his deathbed he uttered Ram Ram and four of his wives committed *sati* with him. In addition to this, his sexual promiscuity and addiction to *bhang* and liquor did a lot of damage to Sikhism. The rank and file of the Sikhs copied him and thus spread immorality among the Sikhs and it sounded the death knell of the *Gur Matta* tradition.

Once again during the movement for the liberation of the Gurdwaras, a number of *Gur Mattas* were passed. This kept the Sikhs united and determined to stick to the purpose behind the passing of the *GurMatta*. It is time the Sikhs revive this tradition and sort out the problems afflicting Sikhism today.

## Chapter Twelve

### Miracles

**M**iracles (*Sidhis*)<sup>362</sup> are extra normal or supernatural powers that appear to defy the laws of nature. They are unusual super physical events which un-aided reason fails to explain. Modern scientific mind proves the falsity of miracles by arguing that the supposed miraculous occurrences have been confined to ages of ignorance and superstition. Science has to a large extent annihilated the belief in the once inexplicable incidents. But science still struggles to explain the modern day abnormal, or extra normal activities of human personality demonstrated through Mesmerism, hypnotism, Telepathy, Psychoanalysis, Telekinesis, premonitions and clairvoyance. This area belongs to Psychic powers.<sup>363</sup>

Miracles may be possible.<sup>364</sup> Everybody has latent spiritual powers, which, if developed to a certain degree through practice and discipline, can result in acquisition of some occult powers. The Sikh Guru's have however condemned the use of miracles to demonstrate one's powers or to claim nearness to God through them. None of the Sikh Gurus called upon the people to have faith in Sikhism because the Gurus could work miracles.<sup>365</sup> They always appealed to reason and to the listener's mind. Self-aggrandizement, glorification or achievement of any material gains through miracles was nowhere near their heart.

---

<sup>362</sup> The word miracle is derived from *Muirs*, which means "Wonderful". Oxford Dictionary defines it as "Event due to Supernatural agency". V.C Desertis defines it as "Physical action of an unseen intelligent agent producing results to which known laws are inadequate" (*Psychic Philosophy* P..32). The equivalent Persian word *Karamat* has been borrowed from Arabic where it means something impossible that defies the laws of nature. Hindus name two types of miracles. Nine *Ridhis* and eighteen *Sidhis* are mentioned in the Sanskrit literature.

<sup>363</sup> Science too believes that man can break the barrier of time and space and can look into past, present and the future. Man has sixth sense, which is free in time and space. (Read George Goodwin's *Science Tests Sixth Sense*)

<sup>364</sup> ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਦਾਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੯੭) ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਤੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਬਾਂਝੈ ਸੇ ਲੈਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੬੬) ਨਵ ਨਿਧੀ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਸਿਧੀ ਪਿਛੈ ਲਗੀਆ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਜੋ ਹਰਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਦਾ ਵਸਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੯)

<sup>365</sup> "Though his biographers have ascribed miracles to Nanac, we never find that he pretended to work any: On the contrary he derided those who did, as deriving power from evil

Miracles abounded in Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim religious books before the advent of Sikhism<sup>366</sup>. It was commonly believed that the test of Prophet hood or Sainthood was the ability to work miracles. Early Sikh writers encountered these cultures in the Punjab. We find mention of Guru Nanak's meetings with Sufis, Buddhists, Jains, Yogis and Vaishnavas. Naturally the writers of the Gurus' biographies were influenced by their literature, folklore and beliefs. The popular Muslim writings like *Tazkra-e-Aulya* by Sheikh Farid-ud-Din Attar and *Kashaf-al-Mahjub* by Hassan Ali Hujviri (popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh) were in wide circulation during the Guru period. Under the influence of such works marvels and miracles became the stock-in-trade of the *Janam Sakhis* as well. Many of these miracles do not agree with what the Gurbani preaches.

Some supposed Sikh miracles appear to be the copies of the stories associated with other religious leaders or Bhagats. For example Nam Dev is said to have turned the *Dehura* and similarly Guru Nanak is recorded as having turned the Mecca.<sup>367</sup> The story is first mentioned in *Tazkra-e-Aulya* where Kaaba (Mecca) had moved towards Rabia Basri when she was in a forest.<sup>368</sup> Prahlad was saved from fire by a miracle and similarly Guru Nanak is described as having asked a boy to enter fire and the latter came out unscathed. A snake shaded Guru Nanak but we find the same story associated with Abdullah who was sleeping in a garden and a snake provided shade to his face.<sup>369</sup> After Kabir's death Hindus and Muslims disputed as to the disposal of his body, which is said to have disappeared leaving behind some flowers. The same story is also associated with Guru Nanak.<sup>370</sup>

---

spirits." J. Malcolm *Sketch of the Sikhs*"

<sup>366</sup> Quran and Bible are full of miracles many of them performed by Moses. Christians define miracles as 'infraction of laws of nature with divine intervention. The biggest miracle the Christians believe in is that Jesus Christ literally rose from the dead.

<sup>367</sup> No non-Sikh historian has recorded this incident.

<sup>368</sup> Read *Tazkra-e-Aulya* by Hakim Muhammad Urdu edition page 63. "ਬੋਲਿਆ ਕਾਬਾ ਫਿਰਨ ਤੇ ਹੋ ਨਾ ਐਡ ਹੈਰਾਨ, ਵਲੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਕਾਬਾ ਨਿਤ ਕਰੁਬਾਨ ॥ ਇਬਨ-ਏ-ਅਰਬੀ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਿਆ 'ਫਤਹੁਤ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਜ। ਅਖੀਂ ਦੇਖੀ ਆਪ ਮੈਂ ਕਾਬੇ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਜ਼ ॥ ..... ਏਸ ਤਰਾਂ ਹੀ ਰਾਬੀਆ ਦੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਗੱਲ। ਦੂਜੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਹੱਜ ਨੂੰ ਤੁਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਮੱਕੇ ਵੱਲ ॥ ਕੀ ਤਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਓਸ ਵੱਲ ਜੰਗਲ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ। ਕਾਬਾ ਤੁਰਿਆ ਆਵਦਾ ਹੋਕੇ ਅੱਗੋਂ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਤੱਕ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੀ ਰਾਬੀਆ "ਸਿਰਫ ਖੁਦਾ ਦਰਕਾਰ"। ਪੱਥਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਕੋਠੜਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਾਰ ॥ (ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>369</sup> See *Muftah-ul-Hakikat* Urdu page 43

<sup>370</sup> Nobody tries to explain why the bodies of the other Gurus did not similarly disappear. Were the other Gurus inferior to Guru Nanak?

Bhai Gurdas mentions the miracles of the *Siddhas*<sup>371</sup> but then tells us that Guru Nanak did not show any miracle but simply said, “I do not possess any miraculous powers or extra physical potency except the Lord’s ‘Word.’”<sup>372</sup> This was the most opportune time for Guru Nanak to show a miracle and take the wind out of the *Siddha*’s sail.

It is understood that it had almost become a fashion in the 15<sup>th</sup> –16<sup>th</sup> centuries to associate miracles with religious men but the Sikh Gurus have stated it umpteen times in the Holy Granth that “*Ridhis* and *Sidhis* are powers on the palms of godmen who care little for them. Those who hanker after these occult powers go astray.”<sup>373</sup> Guru Nanak mentions Babar’s invasion of India when the miracle workers tried their best to bring about Babar’s defeat and death through miracles but they failed miserably.<sup>374</sup> Guru Granth Sahib does not approve miracles. It says, “Supernatural spiritual powers of the *Siddhas* are all emotional attachments. Through them, the remembrance of the Lord does not come to dwell in the mind.” His words are as follows:<sup>375</sup>

*“If I were to acquire supernatural powers and accumulate wealth and pleasure*

*And acquire the power to appear and disappear at will and thus win applause.*

*I would not abandon the Lord’s name because such miracles only delude the fools.”*

(AGGS p.14)

The miracles recorded in the *Janam Sakhis* simply prove that the writers were not well educated and knew very little of Sikh philosophy. This is also evident from the fact that many of the Gurbani hymns quoted in these stories are nowhere to be found in the Holy Granth. Some of them are

<sup>371</sup> ਰੂਪ ਵਟਾਏ ਜੋਗੀਆਂ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਘ ਬਹੁ ਚਲਿਤ ਦਿਖਾਈ ॥ ਇਕਿ ਪਰਿ ਕਰਿਕੈ ਉਡਰਨਿ ਪੰਥੀਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਰਹੇ ਨੀਲਾਈ (ਵਾਰ ੧/੪੧)

<sup>372</sup> ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲੇ ਨਾਥ ਜੀ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਸਚ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਆਲਾਈ। ਬਾਬਹੁ ਸਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਰਮਾਤ ਅਸਾਥੇ ਨਾਹੀਂ॥ (ਵਾਰ ੧ ਪਉੜੀ ੪੩)

<sup>373</sup> ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਸਭ ਭਗਤਾ ਚਰਣੀ ਲਾਗੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭) ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਸਭੁ ਮੋਹੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੩) Read Guru Granth Sahib pages 10, 147, 593, 649, 650, etc.

<sup>374</sup> ਕੋਟੀ ਹੂ ਪੀਰ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਏ ਜਾ ਮੀਰੁ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਧਾਇਆ। ਬਾਨ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਜਲੇ ਬਿਜ ਮੰਦਰ ਮੁਛਿ ਮੁਛਿ ਕੁਇਰ ਰੁਲਾਇਆ। ਕੋਈ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਨ ਹੋਆ ਅੰਧਾ ਕਿਨੈ ਨਾ ਪਰਚਾ ਲਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧੭-੧੮). If the Guru believed in demonstrating miraculous powers, he could himself work a miracle to destroy and annihilate Babar’s army or turn their advance backwards like he supposedly did with Mecca.

<sup>375</sup> ਸਿਧੁ ਹੋਵਾ ਸਿਧਿ ਲਾਈ ਰਿਧਿ ਆਖਾ ਆਉ ॥ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ਬੈਸਾ ਲੋਕੁ ਰਾਖੈ ਭਾਉ ॥ ਮਤੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭੂਲਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪)

associated with Guru Nanak but are actually the work of the later Gurus (Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan Dev). Here and there the Bani of Kabir is associated with Guru Nanak. So the incidents associated with these hymns cannot be said to belong to Guru Nanak's period and most of them are miracles. One of the stories tells us that Guru Nanak visited the Sun. In the modern world nobody would believe such stories. Another story tells us that he walked on water. Again Guru Nanak is mentioned as having met people like Machhandar Nath, Gorakh Nath, Bharthari, Khawaja (a mythical personality) and Sheikh Farid who had lived centuries before him.

Ninety years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, a Sikh named Sukha Singh wrote Gurbilas Patshahi 10. He wrote that after his death Guru Gobind Singh mysteriously appeared through air in the fort of Sitara and holding Bala Rai and Rustam Rai (of Janwara) by hand escaped on his horse through the air and released them on the Bindhyachal Mountain a distance of 300 miles. One wonders why the Guru did not save his own sons like this. Were Bala Rai and Rustam Rai better Sikhs (nobody knows much about them) than the Guru's 40 valiant besieged Sikhs of Chamkaur who could be saved this way? Why did Guru Hargobind not escape from the fort of Gawalior like that? How did the writer come to know about this incident, which had not been recorded by any writer before him? Many such mythical stories have been associated with the Sikh Gurus. Such concocted stories belittle the glorious sacrifices of our Gurus and the devoted Sikhs like Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Bhai Mani Singh and Baba Banda Bahadur because these stories prove that they could not do what ordinary people of other religions could supposedly do. The Sikh Gurus and their followers accepted death rather than snivelling at the feet of the aggressor.<sup>376</sup> The opposite of Miracles is Will (ਭਾਣਾ) and that is what the Sikh Gurus preached.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was asked to show miracles or face death. He disclaimed having any occult powers but the *Mullahs* insisted. Eventually the Guru said, "The only miracle that you will witness from me is that you will not be able to chop my head off (You will not be able to obliterate my ideology)."<sup>377</sup>

<sup>376</sup> ਹਮ ਕਾਹੂ ਕੀ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕਵਤੇ ਅਪਨੇ ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੯)

<sup>377</sup> (1) ਅਕੈ ਦਿਖਾਉ ਕੋਊ ਕਰਾਮਾਤ, ਜਿਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਖਾਵੈ ਦਿਖਾਉ ਸੋਊ ਬਾਤ । ਤੁਮ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸਚੇ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਇਮ ਕਰ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਝੂਠ ਠਹਿਰਾਵੈ॥ (੨) ਹਮਰੇ ਸਿਰ ਕੋ ਤੇਗ ਲਗਯੋ । ਕਟੈ ਨ ਸੋ ਕਰਾਮਾਤ ਦਿਖਯੋ । (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼)

The Guru thus proved that the biggest miracle is the sacrifice of one's life for a noble cause and a noble principle.<sup>378</sup> He never errs who sacrifices himself.

If miracles were sanctioned by the Gurus, then Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur would surely have saved themselves from gruesome deaths and Guru Gobind Singh would not have said, "Men of God should be ashamed of showing occult powers and miracles".<sup>379</sup> He would have saved his innocent children and his mother from certain death through miracles. Guru Arjan Dev even dissuaded Mian Mir from remonstrating with the Emperor on his behalf.

History tells us that once Guru Gobind Singh was sitting with Emperor Bahadur Shah when the *Mullahs* (Muslim priests) challenged the Guru to show a miracle to prove his spiritual might. The Guru flatly refused. When pestered persistently the Guru said, the miracle lies on the tongue of the mighty because, "The mighty (ruler) can order the death or the release of the victim." The chief *Mullah* was not satisfied and continued the argument. The Guru took out a coin from his pocket, held it aloft and said, "Look at this coin, this is the second miracle. It can buy honours and turn paupers into princes." Still the *Mullah* was not satisfied and repeated the same challenge. The Guru, thereupon, unsheathed his sword and said "This is also a miracle. It can chop off a head and sniff off life". This silenced the *Mullahs* and left the Emperor tongue-tied as no one was permitted to unsheath a sword in the presence of the king.<sup>380</sup>

Baba Atal and Baba Gurdita showed miracles. They had to pay with their lives. Later Ram Rai<sup>381</sup> was excommunicated for showing miracles. Guru Amar Das abandoned the village of Goindwal but did not agree to bring miraculous rain.

Miracles can and do happen but true men of God never show miracles to prove their spiritual might. Dr. Radhakrishnan dissuaded religious people

<sup>378</sup> Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grow. (Emerson)

<sup>379</sup> ਨਾਟਕ ਚੋਟਕ ਕੀਏ ਕੁਕਾਜਾ, ਪ੍ਰਭ ਲੋਗਨ ਕਹ ਆਵਤ ਲਾਜਾ" (੧੪) (ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

<sup>380</sup> (1) ਮਾਰਹਿ ਬਖਸ਼ਹਿ ਦੇਰਿ ਬਿਹੀਨਾ । ਤਿਸ ਮੁਖ ਮਹਿ ਲਖ ਅਜਮਤ ਦੀਨਾ (੨) ਪਿਖ ਦੀਨਾਰ ਜੁ ਹਾਥ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਇਹੁ ਅਜਮਤ ਲਿਹੁ ਦੁਤੀ ਬਿਚਾਰੇ । (੩) ਸੁਨਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਨਿਕਾਸੀ, ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਘਟਾ ਸਮਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸੀ। ਤਤਛਿਨ ਬਦਨ ਪੀਤ ਹੋਇ ਗਏ। ਲੋਚਨ ਸਮੁਖ ਨ ਕਰਤੇ ਭਏ। ਤੇਜ ਦਿਪਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਕਹੈ । ਇਹ ਭੀ ਕਰਮਾਤ ਇਕ ਅਹੈ । ਅਬ ਹੀ ਸਿਰ ਉਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਤੇਰਾ, ਫਲ ਸਾਖਾ ਸਮ ਦੇ ਧਰ ਗੇਰਾ । ਪੁਨਹਿ ਜਵਾਬ ਸਵਾਲ ਨਾ ਹੋਵਹਿ, ਜੀਵਨ ਬਾਦ ਬਾਦ ਕਰ ਖੋਵੈ ॥ (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ੬੨੦੮). A similar

story is recorded in Dasam Granth in Charitar No. 374 where Hingla talks about miracles

<sup>381</sup> He is said to have showed 72 miracles to Emperor Aurangzeb.

from acquiring miracles by saying, “*The aspirant for spiritual life is warned about the attraction of supernatural powers. They are spiritually meaningless and irrelevant*”. (Bhagwad Gita page 58)

Extra sensorial perception is a gift of spiritualism but its use for self-aggrandizement or publicising personal occult powers is ego.<sup>382</sup> Guru Nanak did show a miracle the like of which nobody had shown before. He used two levers to mystify the world. One was “Holy congregation”(ਸਤਿ ਸੰਗਤ) coming together of right thinking people and the second was ‘Word’ (ਬਾਣੀ) or right direction.<sup>383</sup> Using these two levers of organisation and set philosophy he started the work which was later taken up by his followers and eventually culminated in the establishment of the Khalsa, the exploits of which are now known all over the world. It was a miracle, the like of which no religious leader has ever shown.

---

<sup>382</sup> ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ and ਤੇਰਾ ਭਾਣਾ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੇ have been the policy of the Sikh Gurus.

<sup>383</sup> ਸਤਿਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਨਾ ਦੂਜੀ ਓਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਰਾਈ ॥ (ਵਾਰ ੧/੪੮ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ)



## Chapter Thirteen

### Worship

These days a number of Sikhs (Some of them overly baptised) have been seen worshipping goddesses. The film-makers appear to be consciously promoting the worship of statues and goddesses through the apparently baptised Sikh actors. As a result the Sikhs are adopting many of the erstwhile Hindu rituals, which were forbidden by the Sikh Gurus.

#### 13.1 Gods and goddesses

Belief in numerous gods and goddesses is one of the cardinal principles of Hinduism. Since no one has ever seen or come across a god or goddess, it is not possible to describe them or to say whether they really exist and if so how many they are. Some put their number at 330,000,000. Some others put the number still higher. Air, fire, mountains, sun, trees, rivers (like Ganges), food, water, butter and salt etc are all gods.<sup>384</sup> These gods and goddesses also have their offspring. For example Hanuman was born to Air, Parvati (Shiva's wife) was the daughter of the Himalayas Mountain, Karan was the son of the sun God. In spite of this some scriptures testify that all gods were born to one mother called *Aditi*.

Hindu gods are also supposed to affect the human life and looks. For example to ask for 'beauty' the Hindus would worship Ashwani Kumar (son of a horse), for long life they worship Markanday, for learning music Saraswati is worshipped. For getting rid of disease and disadvantage the Hindus worship Shani god (the eighth and the youngest son of the Sun).

---

<sup>384</sup> ਅੰਨ੍ਹ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਲੂਣੁ ਪੰਜਵਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਘਿਰਤੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩) Even Brahmans and Emperors become gods. "ਕੋਊ ਦਿਜੇਸ ਕੋ ਮਾਨਤ ਹੈ ਪਸੁ, ਕੋਊ ਮਹੇਸ ਕੋ ਏਸ ਬਤੈ ਹੈ ॥ ਕੋਊ ਕਹੇ ਬਿਸਨੋ ਬਿਸਨਾਇਕ, ਜਾਹਿ ਭਜੈ ਅਘ ਓਘ ਕਟੈ ਹੈ" ॥ ਬਾਰ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਅਰੇ ਜਤੁ ਅੰਤ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਤਜ ਜੈ ਹੈ ॥ ਤਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਧਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਨ ਹੀਏ ਜੋਊ ਥਾ, ਅਬ ਹੈ ਆਗੇ ਊ ਹਵੈ ਹੈ " (੩੩ ਸਵਈਏ)

Like us human beings the gods are also fond of pets. For example Inder, the leader of the gods (*Devtesh*) has a bitch called *Sarma*. For riding, Brahma and his wife Saraswati<sup>385</sup> use a Swan, Vishnu uses Garur (a bird), Shiv uses a bull, Ganesh uses a rat, Kam Devta (sex god) uses a parrot and the sun god travels in a chariot drawn by seven horses. Among the goddesses, Durga always uses a tiger to ride on, Bhairav uses a black dog, Sheetla uses a donkey, Mansa Devi uses a snake and Lakshami (Vishnu's wife) uses a centipede. *Shanishar* uses a vulture as his aeroplane. Like their transport their favourite dishes are also different. For example *Shanishar* is pleased with oil, iron and lentils (ਮਾਂਹ ਦੀ ਦਾਲ). Some others are pleased with meat and intoxicating liquors.

Hindu gods are sometimes jealous of each other. They curse each other<sup>386</sup> and even fight among themselves. Narda (born from Brahma's forehead) and Indra have always been out to create misunderstandings and problems. Snitching and backbiting are permanently associated with these two gods. *Indra*, the leader of the gods, even raped Rishi (*Sant*) Gautama's wife Ahalya.<sup>387</sup> Brahma fell in love with Shiva's wife Sati.<sup>388</sup> Bhagwat Puran tells us that Brahma was a thief. He stole Krishna's cows. All gods are fond of music and dance. *Dev Dasis* (young girls) dance to please the gods<sup>389</sup> and the 6333 *Gandharvas* (and their wives *Gandharvis*) please the gods with music and songs. Gods also have servants. For example Lord Krishna's servant was Gian who for some reason annoyed Lord Krishna. Krishna wanted to behead the servant but Gian ran away and took shelter with Arjun. Krishna had a fierce and gruesome fight with his own brother-in-law Arjun and only Brahma<sup>390</sup> could stop them from fighting.

The gods are not very brave. Once they were tormented by the demons. Instead of facing the demons manly, they approached goddess Durga and beseeched her to save their lives.

<sup>385</sup> Bengali Hindus believe that Vishnu had three wives. Sarasvati, Ganges and Lakhshmi. Once they had a bloody fight among themselves and therefore Vishnu gave Sarasvati to Brahma, Ganges to Shiva and kept Lakhshmi for himself.

<sup>386</sup> Brahma cursed his son Narda to be always engaged in sex. Narda cursed his father by saying that the later will have sex with his own daughter.

<sup>387</sup> ਗੋਤਮ ਤਪਾ ਅਹਿਲਿਆ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਇੰਦੁ ਲੁਭਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੪)

<sup>388</sup> The dirtiest pervert sex story about Shiva and Parvati is recorded in Kot Ruder Sanhita 4.12

<sup>389</sup> This practice is still current in South India in spite of legal restrictions.

<sup>390</sup> Brahma is called the Creator of the universe. Later he is said to have edited the four Vedas around 2500 BC. After 1728000 years of Satyug + 1296000 years of Treta + 864000 years of Duapar (Total 38,88,000 years) he was still alive. Was Brahma God or Krishna God? Are these Gods still alive?

The gods are also jealous of each other and are usually engaged in mutual recriminations and revenge. For example Vishnu turned himself into *Narsingh* and saved *Prahlad* from the atrocities of his father. This did not please Shiva<sup>391</sup> because *Prahlad's* father *Hirnakashyap* was Shiva's follower. Shiva turned himself into a bird called '*Sharabh*' and tore up Vishnu with his nails.

Sacrifices to propitiate the gods are considered pious acts and are known as *Devkaram* (Acts of piety)<sup>392</sup>. The most important six gods are jointly called *Devshatak*. They are *Ganesh*, *Sun*, *Fire*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, and *Durga*. Like us humans the gods and goddesses also revere a Guru. Their Guru is *Barhispati* (*ਬ੍ਰਿਹਸਪਤੀ*). In Zind Avesta, the first religious book of the Parsi Aryans, the word *Dev* or *Devta* was used for ਅਸੁਰ (devils) but later in the Hindu scripture it began to be used for angels (gods and goddesses).

### 13.2 Did the Sikh Gurus worship gods and goddesses?

The following arguments are usually advanced to prove that the Sikhs worship Hindu gods and goddesses.

1. Guru Gobind Singh worshipped Naina Devi goddess<sup>393</sup> and obtained her blessings before instituting the Khalsa order. He composed *Chandi Chariter* in thankfulness to Chandi (Durga).<sup>394</sup> He has clearly mentioned the name of the goddess in many couplets For example “ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਸਿਮਰ ਕੈ OR ਤਹਿ ਹਮ ਅਧਿਕ ਤਪਸਿਆ ਸਾਧੀ, ਮਹਾਂਕਾਲ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਆਰਾਧੀ, ਦੁਰਗਾ ਪਾਠ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਸਭੇ ਪਉੜੀਆਂ (Dasam Granth) ਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰ ਮਨਾਈ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਖੰਡੇ ਕੀ ਬੇਲਾ (Bhai Gurdas Second) etc.

<sup>391</sup> Most of Shiva's followers were cruel egoists and utterly merciless. Some of them are “Ravana”, “Vanasur” and “Hirnakashyap”.

<sup>392</sup> In these sacrifices animals and humans were killed. Raja Sujag organised 1000 *Rajsuya Yagyas* on the banks of river *Narbada* in which 300,000 horses (*Aspmedh Yagya*) and 300,000 humans (*Narmedh Yagya*) were sacrificed. Later in another *Yagya* 400,000 cows (*Gomedh Yagaya*) were sacrificed to feed the Brahmins. Guru Nanak writes, “ਕੁਹਿ ਬਕਰਾ ਰਿਨ੍ਹਿ ਖਾਇਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਆਖੈ ਪਾਇ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੧), ਗੋਡਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੯)

<sup>393</sup> Who was Naina Devi? King Daksh organised a ritual *Hom* but did not invite his daughter *Sati*. She felt insulted and jumped into the ritual fire. *Lord Shiva* lifted the corpse and roamed throughout the world. *Sati's* eyes fell on this mountain and it came to be known as *Naina Devi* (Nain means eyes), Later where her tongue fell, it became *Jawala Devi*.

<sup>394</sup> Sukha Singh (Gur Bilas), Santokh Singh (Gur Partap Suraj), Sumer Singh (Gur Bilas) and Giani Gian Singh (Panth Parkash) all wrote this story. They all appear to have copied it from Sarup Das Bhalla.

2. The Sikh Gurus visited Hindu religious places.

3. There are references to Hindu gods in the Sikh scripture.

In this connection the following facts should be noted before we take up this issue.

- (a) Guru Granth Sahib is the only source of Sikhism authenticated by the Sikh Gurus. Any principle that violates the Gurbani contained in the Granth Sahib cannot be accepted as Sikhism
- (b) Guru Gobind Singh could not be expected to violate the principles enunciated by the previous Gurus.

Let us now consider the story of guru Gobind Singh's Devi worship.

1. First mention of this story is found in *Mehma Parkash* written by Sarup Das Bhalla in 1776 AD (See Sakhi No. 27 P.821 onwards). According to him the Hom ceremony (Sacrificial feast) took place on the top of Naina Devi hill. The goddess gave Guru Gobind Singh a Khanda.<sup>395</sup> When the Amrit was ready Guru Gobind Singh himself was the first to drink it. The book was written 77 years after the supposed incident.
2. Ninety-nine years after Guru Gobind Singh the story appeared in *Gur Bilas* (Life of the 10<sup>th</sup> Guru written by Sukha Singh in 1798 AD) where a Pandit named Dutta Nand of Ujjan is said to have conducted a Hom ceremony. It was held on the banks of river Sutlej. It cost Rs 1,25,000 and lasted for four years.
3. 172 years after Guru Gobind Singh the story was reproduced in *Panth Parkash* (1880 AD) of Giani Gian Singh. Here the *Hom* is said have been performed by Pandit Kesho Datt of Benares on the hilltop of Naina Devi. It lasted for nine months. On the question of human sacrifice, the Guru suggested Kesho Datt himself to be sacrificed. Kesho Datt ran away in the night. (Macauliffe V.5

<sup>395</sup> ਸਭ ਸਤੁ ਬਿਜੈ ਕਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਕੀਆ, ਦੇਵੀ ਜੀ ਖੰਡਾ ਨਿਜ ਦੀਆ ॥੪੧॥ ਮੈਂ ਆਪ ਲੈਤ ਹੋਂ ਤੇਜ ਕੇ ਪੁਨਿ ਸਿਖਨ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਦੇਉ, ਸਭ ਘਟ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹੋਇ ਤੇਜ ਜਬ ਤਬ ਇਨ ਸੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਲੇਉ ॥ Against this Bhai Dya Singh writes, "ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸਿਖ ਮਟ, ਬੁਤ, ਤੀਰਥ, ਦੇਵੀ, ਦੇਵਤਾ, ਬਰਤ, ਪੂਜਾ, ਅਰਚਾ, ਮੰਤ੍ਰ, ਜੰਤ੍ਰ, ਪੀਰ, ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ, ਪੁਛਣਾ, ਤਰਪਣ, ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਕਿਤੇ ਵਲ ਚਿਤ ਦੇਵੈ ਨਾਹੀਂ (ਰਹਿਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਿਆ ਸਿੰਘ)

p.65) and Malcolm (P.49-50) have reproduced the Panth Parkash version.

4. Later Swami Dya Nand made use of this fake story in his *Satyarath Parkash* to flail the Sikhs. He wrote, “ .....Among them was a brave man named Gobind Singh whose ancestors had been put to trouble by the Muslims. He wanted to take revenge but he had no wherewithal to do so. On the other hand the Muslim rule was on the ascendance. He had an event (Hom) organised and propagated that a goddess gave him a boon and a Khanda to fight the Muslims and that he had been assured victory... (Satyarath Parkash P. 379)

Taking advantage of these sources Pandit Sukhpal stated in the preface to his Urdu translation of Dasam Granth (1915 AD) that Guru Gobind Singh “...was a Hindu. To protect Gow Brahman was his Dharam. He used to worship Devis and Devtas like the ordinary Hindus. As a matter of fact his every action was on the same lines as the Hindus.”

All the above-mentioned source books suffer from numerous historical mistakes and contain a lot of self-contradictory matter, which does not agree with the line of thought in Guru Granth Sahib. Even the details of the stories are different in all the above sources. Some historians hazard a guess and say that the incident may have happened on Naina Devi hilltop in 1698 AD but no contemporary or semi-contemporary source confirms this. It sounds ridiculous that the goddess appeared at Naina Devi to bless the formation of the Khalsa but instead of instituting the Khalsa in her presence the Guru moved miles away to Anand Pur and waited for a year (April 1699 AD). It is also worth noting that Guru Gobind Singh had raised the sword and won a number of battles before 1698 AD<sup>396</sup> and so had Guru Har Gobind before him without any help from a goddess. If they could be victorious without the aid of the goddess what was the need to placate the goddess?

---

<sup>396</sup> Guru Gobind Singh had started martial training for his followers immediately after the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. On the Baiskhi day in 1679 AD a number of arms were offered to him by the Sangat of Kabul and Raja Rattan Rai. He started using the battle drum (ਰਣਜੀਤ ਨਗਾਰਾ) and a pennant (ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ) in 1682 AD, which were both forbidden by law. Fifty-two poets started warming the blood of the Sikhs through their ballads. Battle of Bhangani (15<sup>th</sup> April 1687), Battle of Nadaun (November 1688), Hussaini Battle (1695) etc had already been fought and won before the year 1698 AD when goddess is reported to have been worshipped by Guru Gobind Singh. It was before this event that he wrote letters (Hukam Namas) to his devoted followers to bring arms and enlist fighters. See his Hukam Nama to Bhai Tiloka of 1694 AD and to Bhai Sukhia of the same

The incident is not even recorded in the supposed autobiography of Guru Gobind Singh<sup>397</sup> contained in the Dasam Granth. (i) How could Guru Gobind Singh ignore such an important fact that was directly related to his alleged faith in a goddess? (ii) Again instead of praising the goddess, he writes, “My Guru is the One Lord, who was in the beginning and shall ever be”<sup>398</sup> (iii) The Guru had 52 poets. None of them has written this story. If anything the Guru’s intimate childhood friend Bhai Prahlad Singh contradicts the Devi-cult by dedicating the Khalsa to God when he writes, “ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਭੀ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ”<sup>399</sup>. (iv) *Gur Shobha* written by one of Guru Gobind Singh’s court poets does not record this incident. (v) Abdulla Khan, the official reporter of Emperor Aurangzeb makes no mention of it.

“In his book “Guru Gobind Singh” Kartar Singh writes, “*The alleged worship of Durga by the Guru, and all the stories based thereon, are mere fictions, inventions of the clever, yet unsikhlike people.*” (Page102).<sup>400</sup>

Indu Bhushan Bannerjee writes, “...It strikes us as extremely improbable that the Guru had gone through the severe expense and trouble that the ceremony entailed for a purpose that was wholly negative.” (Evolution of the Khalsa page 107)

### 13.3 Conclusion:

So far no one has been able to prove conclusively that the writings of Dasam Granth (which contains *Chandi Chariter I and II* and *Chandi di var*) have been really written by Guru Gobind Singh or that the Dasam Granth has not been corrupted.

---

year.

<sup>397</sup> Most Hindus (and now some Sikhs) preach that Dasam Granth is the autobiography of Guru Gobind Singh. Did Guru Gobind Singh forget to mention this most important incident of his life ?

<sup>398</sup> ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ, ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਝਿਯਹੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਤਿਸਹੀ ਕੋ ਹਮਾਰੀ, ਸਕਲ ਪਰਜਾ ਜਿਨ ਆਪ ਸਵਾਰੀ ॥

<sup>399</sup> ਪੰਥ ਚਲੇ ਤਬ ਜਗਤ ਮੈ ਜਬ ਤੁਮ ਕਰਹੁ ਸਹਾਇ (੩੦) ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਸੁਤ ਤੋਹਿ ਨਿਵਾਜਾ ਪੰਥ ਪਰਦੁਰ ਕਰਬੇ ਕਹੁ ਸਾਜਾ ॥

*Rehat nama* Bhai Dya Singh

<sup>400</sup> ਕੋਠੀ ਜੰਝੂ ਤਿਲਕ ਨ ਧਰਹੈ, ਬੁਤਪ੍ਰਸਤੀ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਕਰਹੈ ॥ ਏਕ ਰਬ ਕੀ ਕਰਤ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਰਖਤ ਨ ਔਰਨ ਕੀ ਮੁਹਛੰਦਗੀ ॥ ਵੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕਤੋਬ ਕੁਰਾਨ,ਪੜ੍ਹਤ ਨ ਸੁਣਤ ਨ ਮਾਨਤ ਕਾਨ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੋ ਕਬੀ ਕਲਾਮ,ਤਿਸ ਪਰ ਰਾਖਤ ਇਮਾਨ ਤਮਾਮ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼)

There are at least four different versions<sup>401</sup> of this Granth available all produced between 1738 AD and 1782 AD after the death of Guru Gobind Singh (1708 AD). The fact that the Dasam Granth was not published by Guru Gobind Singh in his lifetime, is itself a proof that Guru Gobind Singh had no control over its contents.<sup>402</sup> Again the four versions disagree a lot on their contents.

If the Guru had worshipped a goddess, he would have left clear instructions for his followers or entered hymns in honour of the goddess in Guru Granth Sahib. As it is, he has nowhere even thanked the Brahman who was allegedly instrumental in making the goddess appear. Such a gigantic and meritorious task was done through Vedic hymns but the Guru nowhere mentions any such hymn for his descendants to use in times of need. The lines about Kalka and Bhagauti quoted above cannot in any way be connected with Guru Gobind Singh. Connecting a goddess with Guru Gobind Singh is atrocious because it negates all that the forerunner Gurus had done.

Again it should be noted that in the same Dasam Granth Guru Gobind Singh himself forbids worshipping the creation in preference to the worship of the Creator. Macauliffe writes, “ *Durga could never be an object of worship to the Guru, for he reiterated again and again, that it was the Creator alone who should be worshipped and Durga had been created by the creator for the destruction of the demons (p.82).*”<sup>403</sup> How could the same Guru worship Durga (in Chandi Chariter) or Kalka, who was a creature created by God. Would the Guru violate his own principles?<sup>404</sup>

<sup>401</sup> 1. Bhai Mani Singh version 2. Baba Deep Singh version 3. Bhai Sukha Singh version and 4. Bhai Charhat Singh version. In order not to offend any Sikh and cause further fissiparous tendencies among the Sikhs, I have made use of quotations from Dasam Granth throughout this book. My own belief is that only a few portions of the Dasam Granth can be safely accepted as the Guru's writings. However I have no qualms in quoting it where it agrees with the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. Similarly I have used quotes from various other non-Sikh sources, which support the line of thought in Gurbani.

<sup>402</sup> Jehangir killed Guru Gobind Singh's great grandfather Guru Arjan Dev but this Granth praises Jehangir as a very just king. “ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਆਦਿਲ ਮਰਿ ਗਯੋ। ਸ਼ਾਹਜਹਾਂ ਹਜ਼ਰਤਿ ਜੁ ਭਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੬)।

<sup>403</sup> 1 ਤੁਮਹਿ ਛਾਡਿ ਕੋਈ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਧਿਆਉ॥ ੨. ਭਜੋ ਸੁ ਏਕ ਨਾਮਯੋ ਜੁ ਕਾਮ ਸਰਬ ਠਾਮਯੋ ॥ ਨ ਜਾਪ ਆਨ ਕੋ ਜਪੋ ਨ ਅਉਰ ਬਾਪਨਾ ਬਪੋ (੩੭)

<sup>404</sup> Guru Gobind Singh himself writes that Bhagauti sits as a slave at the feet of God. ਚਰਨ ਸਰਨ ਜਿਹ ਬਸਤ ਭਵਾਨੀ । and Gurbani says, ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਦਾਸੀ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਅੰਧ ਅਗਿਆਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੮).How could Guru Gobind Singh be Manmukh! ਦੇਵੀਆਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਨੈ ਮਰਮ । ਸਭ ਊਪਰ ਅਲਖ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪)

Some historians write that the drama was played by the Guru to prove the inefficacy of the goddess in helping the nation. But the Guru himself condemns this sort of dramas<sup>405</sup> in the so-called Dasam Granth, which is quoted to prove him a worshipper of the Goddess. Another fact worth remembering is that according to Sumer Singh the Shudras were not allowed to go near the Havan of the goddess. This clearly contradicts the Guru's gift of *Amrit* to the *Shudras* on equal footing with others. How could the Guru offer *Amrit* to the *Shudras* hated by the Goddess and the Brahman?

If for the sake of argument it is accepted that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped Durga or Kalka, then he should not be expected to worship anything else but we find that the same Dasam Granth also proves that he worshipped sword (ਖੜਗ) when he wrote: “ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਖੜਗ ਕਉ ਕਰੋ ਸੁ ਹਿਤੁ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ” Not only the sword he even worshipped the guns and canons “ਨਮੋ ਤੀਰ ਤੋਪੰ ਜਿਨੈ ਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਘੋਪੰ ” ॥ It should also be kept in mind that a goddess is worshipped through a stone statue but Dasam Granth itself condemns worship of a statue by saying “ਪਾਇ ਪਰੋ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੇ ਜਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਾਹਨ ਮੈਂ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਨਾਹੀਂ (੯੯)<sup>406</sup> and defines *Parmesar* (ਪਰਮੇਸਰ) as ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਨਿਤਯੰ ਨਿਰੂਪੰ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੰ (without physical shape, always present, without contours).<sup>407</sup>

The conclusion derived from the use of words like Durga or Kalka etc cannot therefore be accepted as a conclusive proof that the Guru worshipped the goddess.

Again the goddess herself is stated to have no power. God is the source of all power. The others simply beg him for it. Why would Guru Gobind Singh beg from a beggar?<sup>408</sup>

<sup>405</sup> ਨ ਨੈਨੰ ਮੀਚਾਉ, ਨ ਡਿਭੰ ਦਿਖਾਉ ॥ ਨ ਕੁਕਰਮੰ ਕਮਾਉ ਨ ਭੋਖੀ ਕਹਾਉ

<sup>406</sup> ਪਾਖਾਣ ਪੂਜਹੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ । ਨ ਭੋਖ ਭੀਜਹੋਂ ਕਹੀਂ ॥ ਅਨੰਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਗਾਏ ਹੋਂ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਪਾਇ ਹੋਂ (੩੫) ਅਛਤ ਧੂਪ ਦੀਪ ਅਰਪਤ ਹੈ ਪਾਹਨ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਥੈ ਹੈ ॥ ਤਾ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਾਂ ਸਿਧ ਹੈ ਰੇ ਜਤ੍ਰੁ ਤੋਹਿ ਕਛੁ ਬਰ ਦੈ ਹੈ ॥ ਕਾਹੇ ਕੇ ਪੂਜਤ ਪਾਹਨ ਕਉ ਕਛੁ ਪਾਹਨ ਕੈ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਨਾਹੀਂ । ਤਾਹੀ ਕੇ ਪੂਜ ਪੂਭੁ ਕਰਕੈ ਜਿਹ ਪੂਜਤ ਹੀ ਅਘ ਓਘ ਮਿਟਾਹੀ ( ੭੧੪ ) ਫੋਕਟ ਧਰਮ ਭਯੋ ਫਲਹੀਨ ਜੋ ਪੂਜ ਸਿਲਾ ਜੁਗ ਕੋਟ ਗਵਾਈ ॥ ਸਿਧ ਕਹਾਂ ਸਿਲ ਕੇ ਪਰਮੇ ਬਲ ਬ੍ਰਿਧ ਘਟੀ ਨਵਨਿਧ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥ (੩੩) ਸਵਈਏ) This statement of Guru Gobind Singh coincides with what the other Gurus had been saying before him. ਅੰਧੇ ਗੁੰਗੇ ਅੰਧ ਅੰਧਾਰ। ਪਾਬਰ ਲੇ ਡੂਬੇ ਮੁਗਧ ਗਵਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੬) The Guru himself writes that he is an iconoclast. “ ਮਨਮ ਕੁਸ਼ਤਨਮ ਕੋਹੀਆਂ ਬੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਤ, ਕਿ ਉ ਬੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੰਦ ਮਨ ਬੁਤ ਸ਼ਿਕਸਤ”

<sup>407</sup> “ਤਾਹੀ ਕੇ ਧਯਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਨ ਹੀਏ; ਜੋਊ ਥਾ ਅਬ ਹੈ, ਅਰ ਆਗੇਊ ਹਵੈ ਹੈ” “ਬਿਨ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਨਾ ਕਿਰਤਮ ਮਾਨੇ । ਆਦਿ ਅਜੋਨਿ ਅਜੈ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਤਿਹ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਜਾਨੇ” (੭੧੦) “ਇਕ ਬਿਨ ਦੁਸਰ ਕੋ ਨ ਚਿਨਾਰ ॥ ਭੰਜਨ ਗੜਨ ਸਮਰਥ ਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜਾਨਤ ਹੈ ਕਰਤਾਰ” (੭੧੧)

<sup>408</sup> ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਦੁਰਗਾ ਸਾਜ ਕੇ ਦੈਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਸ ਕਰਾਇਆ । ਕਿਨੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਤ ਨਾ ਪਾਇਆ ।



The word **ਕਾਲਕਾ** has been used by Bhai Gurdas (second) in his var about the Khalsa. Whether such a person really existed and wrote the var is uncertain. Who added this var to those written by his predecessor Bhai Gurdas (first) is not known. The very fact that it was interpolated into another author's work makes the writer's intention doubtful.

Concerning the use of the word **ਭਗੋਤੀ**, it needs to be noted that this word does not always mean “Bhagwati Devi”(wife of Shiva). The word Bhagauti has been extensively used in Gurbani for God and God's devotees.<sup>409</sup> The Guru could not (if he used it) have used it for goddess Bhawani because the goddess is condemned in the Granth Sahib as useless for humanity.<sup>410</sup> “*The angelic beings, goddesses and gods are deluded by doubt. The Siddhas and seekers, and even Brahma are deluded by doubt. Wandering around, deluded by doubt, people are ruined.*”<sup>411</sup>

The most prominent Sikh Bhai Mani Singh writes, “*Naam* is the God of gods. Some worship goddesses, some worship Shiva; some others bow to Ganesh or other gods. The Sikhs of the Guru only worship *Satnam*, which clears all impediments. This is why the dedication is offered through *Satnam*.” (*Gian Ratnawali*)<sup>412</sup>

<sup>409</sup> ਭਗਉਤੀ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਾ ਰੰਗੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੪) ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਚਰਨ ਰਿਦੈ ਬਸਾਵੈ । ਨਾਨਕ ਐਸਾ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਕਉ ਪਾਵੈ । (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੪) ਭਗਉਤੀ ਮੁਖਾ ਮਨੁ ਮੋਹਿਆ ਮਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੮) ਭਗਉਤੀ ਰਹਤ ਜੁਗਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੧) ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕਪਟੁ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਕਹਾਏ । ਪਾਖੰਡ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਪਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮)

<sup>410</sup> ਮਹਾ ਮਾਈ ਕੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰੈ ॥ ਨਰ ਸੈ ਨਾਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਅਉਤਰੈ ॥ ਤੂ ਕਹੀਅਤ ਹੀ ਆਦਿ ਭਵਾਨੀ ॥ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕੀ ਬਰੀਆ ਕਹਾ ਛਪਾਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੪) Worship of goddess would mean that Guru Gobind Singh considered God to be a woman but he is himself accepted as having said, “ਤੇਜ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਹੈ ਅਖੰਡਣ ਕੇ ਖੰਡ ਹੈ, ਮਹੀਪਨ ਕੇ ਮੰਡ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਨਰ ਹੈ ॥”

<sup>411</sup> ਭਰਮੇ ਸੁਚਿ ਨਰ ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ॥ ਭਰਮੇ ਸਿਧ ਸਾਧਿਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇਵਾ ॥ ਭਰਮਿ ਭਰਮਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਡਹਕਾਏ ॥ ਦੁਤਰ ਮਹਾ ਬਿਖਮ ਇਹ ਮਾਏ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਭੈ ਮੋਹ ਮਿਟਾਇਆ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੋਹ ਪਰਮ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫੮)

<sup>412</sup> “ਨਾਮ ਸਭ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੇਵ ਹੈ। ਕੋਈ ਦੇਵੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਾਂਵਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ਿਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ, ਕੋਈ ਗਨੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ, ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਸਿਖ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਨੂੰ ਆਰਾਧਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਭ ਵਿਘਨ ਨਾਸ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਨ ਆਦਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ (ਭਗਤ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ) “ਆਦਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਵਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ‘ਮਹੁਪਰਕ’ ਆਦਿ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਧਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ। ਯੱਗ ਆਦਿ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਮਹੱਤਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਨਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਬਲੀ ਆਦਿ ਦੀ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰਾਂ ਸ਼ਿਵ-ਭਗਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਦੇਵੀ-ਭਗਤੀ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਆਦਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਪੁਰਾਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਸ, ਸ਼ਰਾਬ, ਭੰਗ, ਗਾਂਜਾ, ਧਤੂਰਾ ਤੇ ਤਮਾਕੂ ਆਦਿ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ੀ ਅਹਾਰ ਉਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। (‘ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ’ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਰਾਮ ਤੀਰਥ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬)

It is clearly stated in the Dasam Granth that Chandi Di War is a translation of Durga Saptashti, a part of Markanday Puran.<sup>413</sup> Ideas expressed by the original writer of the *Saptashti* (700 Shalokas) cannot be foisted upon the translator. If a Hindu translates the Quran, he will not become a Muslim. Even in Chandi Di war the word Bhagauti is not always used for the goddess. For example in the following lines it is used for the sword, “ਦੁਹਾਂ ਕੰਧਾਰਾਂ ਮੂੰਹ ਜੁੜੇ ਨਾਲ ਧਉਂਸਾ ਭਾਰੀ । ਲਈ ਭਗੌਤੀ ਦੁਰਗਸ਼ਾਹ ਵਰਜਾਗਨ ਭਾਰੀ । ਲਾਈ ਰਾਜੇ ਸੁੰਭ ਨੂੰ ਰਤ ਪੀਏ ਪਿਆਰੀ ।

In his book *Dabistan-e-Mazahib* (see *Taleem 2 Nazar12*), the Muslim writer Mohsin Fani has recorded a story. A Sikh of Guru Hargobind, named Bhairo entered a temple and smashed the nose of the statue of goddess. He was arrested and brought before Raja Tara Chand of Kirat Pur and asked to explain why he did the sacrilege. The Sikh said, “Ask the Devi “who did it?” and why did she feel helpless to call for assistance? If she cannot protect herself or call for help how can she protect other people?” The Guru did not approve the act and admonished his Sikh for injuring people’s religious susceptibilities. However the Sikh had proved his point. To say that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the same goddess for protection is ridiculous.

In passing it should also be noted that Chandi helped Inder. Inder is a known voluptuary interested only in dances of the *Apasras* (beautiful damsels). He sent women of bad character to the Rishis (*Sants*) to prevent them from praying to God. He himself raped Rishi Gautam’s wife Ahalya and suffered severe punishment for this transgression. In Chandi Di war the goddess Chandi fought in favour of Inder to help him regain his throne. She is eulogised by saying, “You committed a great act by killing the demons and securing kingdom for Indra, on this account your reputation has enhanced in the whole world.”<sup>414</sup> Would Guru Gobind Singh worship such a goddess who promoted prudery, prurience and lasciviousness by helping Indra?

Some people interpret Chandi as “God’s power” little realising that God’s power cannot be isolated from God. Anybody worshipping God automatically worships him in entirety (power, grace, compassion etc.)

<sup>413</sup> ਸਤਸਈ ਕੀ ਕਥਾ ਯਹਿ ਪੂਰੀ ਭਈ ਹੈ । (See Durga Saptashti Chapter 12) ਇਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮਾਰਕੰਡੇ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਚੰਡੀ ਚਰਿਤ੍ਰ ਉਕਤਿ ਬਿਲਾਸ ਮੋਖ-ਕੋਟਭ ਬਦਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਬਮ ਧਿਆਏ । Also see all chapters of the poem.

<sup>414</sup> ਦੈਤਨ ਕੋ ਮਾਰ ਰਾਜ ਦੀਨੋ ਤੈ ਸੁਰੇਸ਼ ਹੂੰ ਕੋ, ਬਡੇ ਜਸ ਲੀਨੋ ਜਗ ਤੇਰੇ ਈ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਹੈ (ਚੰਡੀ ਚਰਿਤ੍ਰ ਉਕਤ:ਬਿਲਾਸ:ਅੰਕ ੨੨੭)

Concerning the Gurus' visit to the Hindu temples there is no doubt that Bhai Lehna Ji and Baba Amar Das visited Hindu places of religion and performed Hindu rituals for years but once they accepted Sikhism, they did not perform any Hindu ritual. Their visits to Hindu temples afterwards were planned to condemn Hindu practices and to preach Sikhism.<sup>415</sup>

In Sikhism the word *Devta* (god or angel) is used for pious person and the word *Devi* is used to denote a pious and faithful female.<sup>416</sup> Worship of gods and goddesses is forbidden and they are described as beings of no consequence and even their existence is denied.<sup>417</sup> The Sikhs are instructed to accept no gods or goddesses but only to direct their prayers to God.<sup>418</sup>

Guru Gobind Singh believed in God and God alone and worshipped no other gods.<sup>419</sup> This was in line with the teachings of the previous Gurus and he could not have gone against the philosophy preached by his father and his grandfather in the house of Guru Nanak.<sup>420</sup>

<sup>415</sup> ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਸਭਿ ਦੇਵਾ (ਮ:੩) ਮਹਾਦੇਓ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਵਰਤੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਤਾਮਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਾ (ਮ:੩) ਵੇਦ ਪੜਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਸੁ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ ਵਾਦੁ ਵਖਾਣਹਿ ਮੋਹੇ ਮਾਇਆ (ਮ:੩) ਪੰਡਿਤ ਭੁਲੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਲਾਗੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੇ ਵਾਪਾਰਿ । ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤਿਸਨਾ ਭੁਖ ਹੈ ਮੂਰਖ ਭੁਖਿਆਂ ਮੁਏ ਗਵਾਰ (ਮ:੩) ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਤੈ ਗੁਣ ਭੁਲੇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੋਹ ਵਧਾਇ (ਮ:੩) ਸੰਧਿਆ ਤਰਪਣੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝੈ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ (ਮ:੩)

<sup>416</sup> ਮਾਣਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਭਏ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦) ਸਾਧ ਕਰਮ ਜੋ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਨਾਮ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਕਹਾਵੈ (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ). ਵਿਚ ਰੰਗ ਦੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਹੈ ਨਾਰ ਸਾਡੀ, ਵਿਚ ਜੰਗ ਦੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਕਟਾਰ ਸਾਡੀ (ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>417</sup> ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ । ਅਵਰ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਏਕੋ ਸੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੫) ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਪੂਜੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਕਿਆ ਮਾਗਉ ਕਿਆ ਦੇਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭) ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਹੈ ਮਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯) ਦੇਵੀਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨੈ ਮਰਮ । ਸਭ ਊਪਰਿ ਅਲਖ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪) ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸਿਖ ਮਠ, ਬੁਤ, ਤੀਰਥ, ਦੇਵੀ, ਦੇਵਤਾ, ਬਰਤ, ਪੂਜਾ, ਤੰਤ੍ਰ ਜੰਤ੍ਰ, ਪੀਰ, ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਗਾਇਤਰੀ, ਕਿਤੇ ਵਲ ਚਿੱਤ ਦੇਵੇ ਨਾਹੀਂ ( ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਯਾ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>418</sup> ਤਿਆਗਿ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਆਨ ਕਉ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਮੂੜ ਮੁਗਧ ਖਲ ਖਰ ਤੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੬੭) ਨਿਹਫਲੁ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਜੀਵਿਆ ਜਿ ਖਸਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਅਵਰੀ ਕਉ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੦੯) ਦਰ ਮਜ਼ਹਬੇ ਮਾ ਗੈਰਪਰਸਤੀ ਨ ਕੁਨੰਦ । ਸਰ ਤਾ ਬਕਦਮ ਬਹੋਸ ਓ ਮਸਤੀ ਨ ਕੁਨੰਦ= ਸਾਡੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ । ਸਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਤਕ ਹੋਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਮਸਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਚਦੇ ( ਤੋਸੀਫ਼ੇ ਸਨਾ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>419</sup> ਏਕ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਏਕ॥ ਏਕ ਹੀ ਸੂਪ ਸਭੈ ਏਕੈ ਜੋਤ ਜਾਨਵੇ ॥

<sup>420</sup> “ਸਿਦਕ ਬੂਏ ਬੋਰ ਮਗਜ਼ ਬੋਰ ਸੁਦਹ, ਬੇਸਿਦਕੇ ਬੂਏ ਗੰਦ ਆਮਦ ਮੰਦ ਆਮੰਦ” Pleasing is the sweet smell of the faithful. Foul smell is emitted by those who have no firm faith in one God.” Guru Gobind Singh could not be unfaithful to Guru Nanak.

## Chapter Fourteen

### Sant

The word *Sant*<sup>421</sup> is quite old and has been used in the Hindu religious books since times immemorial. It is defined as “Spiritually elevated person who has realised God and is at peace with his mind.”<sup>422</sup> What is conspicuously missing in the old Hindu books is the name of any person known as “*Sant*”. There are *Rishis*, *Brahamcharis* and *Bhagats* but not a single “*Sant*”.

The renowned Sikh scholar Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha defines this word as ਵਿਦਵਾਨ (Knowledgeable person), ਪੰਡਿਤ (Intellectual), ਉੱਤਮ (Highest), ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਠ (Highly Respectable).<sup>423</sup> A Sikh *Sant* is therefore a highly intellectual morally perfect person who follows a set of principles and stands for the whole of humanity. He does not compromise his principles even in times of extreme danger. In the Guru Granth Sahib the words ਸਾਧ, ਗੁਰਮੁਖ, ਹਰਿਜਨ, ਸੰਤ ਜਨ, ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਗ, ਉਤਮ ਜਨ, ਦਾਸ ਦਾਸਨ, ਸੇਵਕ ਜਨ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ etc have been used interchangeably and are most often used in plural form indicating that they stand for pious people of all denominations. The simplest definition of a *Sant* as given by the Sikh Gurus is, “Only He is the *Sant* who is blessed by God. All his deeds coincide with those of God’s.”<sup>424</sup>

<sup>421</sup> The word ‘*Sant*’ should not be confused with Christian (or English word) Saint. A Saint is declared as such after the death of the person on the basis of three miracles occurring due to him /her. The Sikh *Sant* is a living, spiritually enlightened Gurmukh who lives according to the principles enunciated in the Holy Granth. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes, “ਮਨ ਇੰਦਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਟਿਕਾਇਆ ਹੈ । ਸਾਂਤਾਤਮਾ ॥ (ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪੩) See definition of Sant, “ਆਠ ਪਹਿਰ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਨੈ..... (ਆਸਾ ਮ:੫)

<sup>422</sup> ਸੰਤੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿਦਾ ਸਾਂਤਾ (ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਨਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਾਂਤ ਸਰੂਪ ਮਨੁਖ ਸੰਤ ਹੈ )

<sup>423</sup> The Quran defines a saint as follows, “He who was dead and whom we have brought to life making for him a light whereby he walketh among men.” (Quran VI)

<sup>424</sup> ਸੋਈ ਸੰਤੁ ਜਿ ਭਾਵੈ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਸੰਤ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੈ ਏਕੈ ਕਾਮ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੬੭) ਸੰਤਾ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਰੀਤਿ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖਹਿ ਨਾਲੀ ॥ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਆਰਾਧਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਉ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਕੀਜੈ ਆਲਕਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੮੫) ਜਾ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਨਾਸ । ਜਾ ਕੇ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਪਰਗਾਸ॥ ਸੇ ਸੰਤਨ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤ, ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ ਗਾਇਐ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਨੀਤ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੬੩) One unique

Elsewhere Guru Arjan Dev gives another full definition of the *Sants* confirming the same concept as follows:

*“At all times they keep the Lord in mind and surrender to His Will. They are humble and consider only God as their support. Dear brother listen, their qualities cannot be described. They remain busy in remembering the Lord and even their rest is spent in singing His praises. They make no difference between friends and foes and see God in both. They erase millions upon millions of sins. They dispel suffering; they are givers of the life of the soul. They are steadfast, men of word and shun wealth and reputation. Even the gods and the angels cherish their company. Blessed is a meeting with them, and fruitful is their service. With his palms pressed together, Nanak offers his prayer: O Lord, Treasure of Excellence, please bless me with the service of such Sants.”*<sup>425</sup>

*Haumain* (Self-centred concern) is a part of human beings. It is only through this trait that humans are able to live and make worldly progress. However problems arise when too much attention to it brings the man down to the level of animals. In his daily life an ordinary man is usually dominated by self-will and his activities are dictated by ego (*Haumain*), which is a limitation to his spiritual progress. *Haumain* is opposed to *Naam*.<sup>426</sup> The *Sants* instruct humans to rise above self-will and substitute *Haumain* with God-centeredness by reemerging with God and living a virtuous life.

---

quality of the *Sants* is that they behold the Supreme Lord God with them at all times and never show laziness in remembering Him.

<sup>425</sup> ਆਠ ਪਹਰ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਨੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਮਾਨੈ ॥ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੰਤਨ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥ ਹੋਇ ਰਹੇ ਸਭ ਕੀ ਪਗ ਛਾਰੁ ॥ ਸੰਤ ਰਹਤ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਉਆ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਕਥਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਵਰਤਣਿ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ ॥ ਅਨਦ ਰੂਪ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਬਿਸ਼ਾਮ ॥ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਏਕ ਸਮਾਨੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਕੋਟਿ ਅਘ ਕਾਟਨਹਾਰਾ ॥ ਦੁਖ ਦੂਰਿ ਕਰਨ ਜੀਅ ਕੇ ਦਾਤਾਰਾ ॥ ਸੂਰਬੀਰ ਬਚਨ ਕੇ ਬਲੀ ॥ ਕਉਲਾ ਬਪੁਰੀ ਸੰਤੀ ਛਲੀ ॥ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਸੰਗ ਬਾਛਹਿ ਸੁਰਦੇਵ ॥ ਅਮੋਘ ਦਰਸੁ ਸਫਲ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ॥ ਕਰ ਜੋਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਰੇ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥ ਮੋਹਿ ਸੰਤਹ ਟਹਲ ਦੀਜੈ ਗੁਣਤਾਸਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੨)

<sup>426</sup> ਹਉਮੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਵਿਰੋਧੁ ਹੈ ਦੁਇ ਨ ਵਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਠਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬੦)

Guru Nanak preached that the way to God lies through living a meaningful and pious life and that the higher spiritual status is attained only through altruistic and moral living.<sup>427</sup> Living a truthful ideal life man learns to carry out God's will through his creative activities in the society. His spiritual life and moral life become synonymous. The self-lessness thus garnered brings merit to the soul and helps the devotee get attuned to the all-soul. At this stage whatever good the man does, is claimed by him as the work of God. All trials and tribulations that befall are borne with equanimity accepting them as God's dispensation.

Hindu *sants* usually believed in leaving the world altogether and practising detachment. The Hindu way of abandoning the world or involvement in penance and mortification of the body is contrary to the Guru's way. According to Sikhism, God dwells within us, and that is where man must find Him through self-consciousness and self-less activity. For an individual self-centered man (*Manmukh*) the way to religion is to try to turn himself into God-centred person (*Gurmukh*). Those who tread this path under the perfect guidance of a Guru eventually become as spiritually enlightened as the Guru (This happened with Angad who from being an ordinary Sikh became the second Guru of the Sikhs). Those who have not reached the summit, and are never the less far advanced in spirituality, are called *Sants*, *Sadh* or *Gurmukh*. Their company ennoble a person.<sup>428</sup>

## 14.1 Modern day Sants

---

<sup>427</sup> ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨)

<sup>428</sup> “ਜੇ ਵਡ ਭਾਗ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਮ ਜਨਾ ਭੋਟਾਇ, ਦਰਸਨੁ ਸੰਤ ਦੇਹੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਸਭੁ ਦਾਲਦ ਦੁਖੁ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਇ (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੧) ਸਾਹੂ ਦੱਸਨਮਰਿਯਾਨ ਸੋਨਿਵਾਸੋ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੇ ( ਧੰਮਪਦ ਯਵ.੨੦੬) (ਸਾਧੂਆ ਦਾ ਸੰਗ ਸੁਭ ਤੇ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ॥)

During the time of the Sikh Gurus the word “*Sant*” existed only in the mystical realm and no one claimed physically to be known as a *Sant*. The status of a *Sant* was difficult to obtain and one was supposed to go through a long process of self-reformation and introspection.<sup>429</sup> Now that worldliness has begun to spread its wings, the worldly *Sants* have started appearing like mushrooms. These self-made *Sants* make too much noise but within them is a great void.<sup>430</sup> Therefore today the word *Sant* has been devalued like a base coin. Once it was a reality and the *Sants* were rare but now is the age of skulduggery and *Sants* are aplenty. There are hundreds of impostors and cheats full of *Haumain*.<sup>431</sup> They come nowhere near the ideal set by the Sikh Gurus. There is a dichotomy between what they preach and what they themselves live by. The Sikh Gurus did not name any *Sants* during their time for 239 years. Although there were numerous Sikhs who had attained very high spiritual positions they were all called Bhai (ਭਾਈ= Brother).

Baba Buddha, Bhai Mardana, and Bhai Mansukh (who went to Ceylon and converted Raja Shibnabh to Sikhism) were very prominent Sikhs of Guru Nanak.

At the time of Guru Amar Das there were 22 Gursikhs of high character who preached Sikhism and occupied posts of *masands* (preachers). Bhai Gurdas preached Sikhism at Agra and Benares, Bhai Kattu and Bhai Garhia (Sikhs of 6<sup>th</sup> Guru) preached in Kashmir. Bhai Goinda, Bhai Tirloka, Bhai Diala and Bhai Kataru (Sikhs of Guru Har Rai) preached in Kabul. Bhai Mati Das and Bhai Sati Das accepted a tortuous death in front of Guru Tegh Bahadur and yet none of them was called a “*Sant*”. The five Pyaras of Guru Gobind Singh were not called *Sants* but only Bhai. Later Baba Deep Singh, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Baba Banda Singh Bahadur all laid down their lives for the Sikh cause but were not named *Sants*. The Bhats were spiritually so advanced that the Guru included their writings in the Guru Granth Sahib. Yet they were not called *Sants*. In the modern times Bhai Kahan Singh, Professor Sahib Singh, Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Giani Dit Singh and many others were great scholars of Gurbani and yet they were called

<sup>429</sup> ਮਿਸਲ ਫਕੀਰਾਂ ਗਾਖਤੀ ਸੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਪੂਰ ਕਰੰਮਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੮੪) “ਸੈਲ ਸੈਲ ਮਾਣਕ ਨਹੀਂ, ਗਜ ਗਜ ਮੋਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ॥ ਬਨ ਬਨ ਮਹਿੰ ਚੰਦਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਾਧ ਨਾ ਪੁਰ ਪੁਰ ਮਾਹਿੰ”

<sup>430</sup> ਜੋ ਡੁਬੰਦੇ ਆਪਿ ਸੋ ਤਰਾਏ ਕਿਨਖੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੦੧) Those who are themselves drowning cannot save others.

<sup>431</sup> ਹੱਕ ਪੁਸ਼ਤਾਂ ਬੁਦ ਪੁਸਤੀ ਚੂੰ ਕੁਨਦ, ਸਰ ਬੁਲੰਦਾਂ ਮਯਲੋ ਪਸਤੀ ਚੂੰ ਕੁਨਦ (ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਨਾਮਾ ਭ: ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) Those who worship God never attach any importance to themselves. How can the men of God think of letting others bow to them? “ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਹੋਵੇਗੇ ਸੋ ਸਿਵਾਏ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਮਨੁਖ ਜਾਮੇ ਕੇ ਨ ਮਾਨੇਗੇ (ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ) ਘਰ ਘਰ ਹੋਏ ਬਹੋਗੇ ਰਾਮਾ ॥ ਤਿਨ ਤੇ ਸਰੇ ਨ ਕੋਊ ਕਾਮਾ ॥

neither Braham Giani nor *Sants*. Compared with them our so-called *Sants* call themselves 10008 *Sant Braham Giani Maharaj* etc and live in luxury. More befitting numeral honorific for most of them would be 420(cheats).

The Guru was desperate in finding a *Sant* and was prepared to sacrifice himself at the feet of the *Sant*.<sup>432</sup> He also mentions that a “*Sant*” is rare and is one among millions.<sup>433</sup> Outlining the duties of the *Sants* Bhai Gurdas says that a “*Sant*” is like a fence for the crop.<sup>434</sup>

Our Gurus called themselves lowly (Neech), “Slave”, Servant, or even “Dog”<sup>435</sup> but our modern-day Sikh *Sants* call themselves *Braham Giani* (knower of God). Like the devil quoting scriptures they even quote hymns from Gurbani out of context to prove their *Santhood*.

They cannot be imagined to have attained the spiritual glory attained by those who remained in the Guru’s presence all their lives and even sacrificed themselves. In fact *Bhagat Bhikha* writes that he searched for *Sants* and found none. “*I have been searching for the Sants; I have seen so many holy and spiritual people. The hermits, Sanyasis, ascetics, penitents, fanatics and Pandits all speak sweetly. I wandered around lost for a year, but no one touched my soul. I listened to preachers and teachers, but I could not be happy with their lifestyles.* (P.1395)<sup>436</sup>

Wherever the word ‘*Sant*’ occurs in Gurbani it is figuratively and reverently used for the Gurus or for those who had started on the path of spirituality and not for any ochre coloured-overall wearer, half-clad, ash-smeared impostors who go about spreading fear of their occult powers among people or arrogantly claim rapport with God.<sup>437</sup> For example when Guru Arjan Dev writes” *By good fortune, I have met the Sant Guru*”,<sup>438</sup> he is referring to Guru Ram Das. Here and there the word *Sant* has also been used for groups of pious people (or Sikhs).<sup>439</sup>

<sup>432</sup> “ਮੇਕਉ ਧਾਰਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਜਗਜੀਵਨ ਦਾਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਸੰਤ ਪਗੀ ਲੇ ਪਾਵੈ, ਹਉ ਕਾਟਉ ਕਾਟਿ ਬਾਢਿ ਸਿਰੁ ਰਾਖਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੰਤੁ ਚੜਿਆਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੧) ਸਾਧੂ ਧੂਰਿ ਜਾਚਹਿ ਜਨ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਦ ਕੁਰਬਾਨਾ ਹੇ (ਪੰਨਾ.੧੦੭੫) “ਦਰਸਨੁ ਸੰਤ ਦੇਹੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਸਭੁ ਦਾਲਦੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੦).

<sup>433</sup> ਕੋਟ ਮਧੇ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਤ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ, ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਤਰਾਇਆ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੮)

<sup>434</sup> ਖੇਤੀ ਵਾੜਿ ਸੁ ਢਿੰਗਰੀ ਕਿਕਰ ਆਸ ਪਾਸ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਗੈ, ਸਪ ਲਪੇਟੇ ਚੰਨਣੈ ਬੂਹੇ ਜੰਦਾ ਕੁਤਾ ਜਾਗੈ (ਵਾਰ ੨੬ ਪਉੜੀ ੨੫)

<sup>435</sup> ਹਮ ਕੁਕਰ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੯) ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਤੂ ਪੂਰਨ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੨), ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ਪਿਆਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬੨) ਮੈ ਓਲ੍ਹਗੀਆ ਓਲ੍ਹਗੀ ਹਮ ਛੋਰੂ ਬਾਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੧) I am the lowest slave of Your slaves; I am Your most humble servant. ਓਲ੍ਹਗੀਆ ਓਲ੍ਹਗੀ = ਭਾਂਡੇ ਮਾਂਜਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਜੂਠੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਮਾਂਜਣ ਵਾਲਾ

<sup>436</sup> ਰਹਿਓ ਸੰਤ ਹਉ ਟੋਲਿ ਸਾਧ ਬਹੁਤੋਰੇ ਡਿਠੇ ॥ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਤਪਸੀਅਹ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਏ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਮਿਠੇ.....(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੯੫)

<sup>437</sup> “ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹੀਏ ਦੇ ਜਹਾਂ ਜੁਜ਼ ਸੋਰੇ ਗੋਗਾ ਬੋਸ ਨੇਸਤ । ਪੇਸਿ ਦਰਵੇਸ਼ੋ ਕਿ ਉ ਅਜ ਮੁਦਆ ਖਾਹਦ ਗੁਜਸਤ = ਮਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਖਾਹਸ਼ਾਂ ਤੋਂ



Most of the modern day Sikh *Sants* are bereft of spiritual qualities and are not conversant with Gurbani. They behave like a wolf in a sheep's clothing and many of them have fallen foul with the law and have been imprisoned for sexual offences. They sell drugs (like opium, Hashish, LSD etc) and extort money from gullible Sikhs specially women.<sup>440</sup> They are also introducing Hindu rituals (like Kumbh, coconut, red cloth, jote, Arti, blowing conch shell, showering flowers, Sampat Paaths and mute *Akhand Paaths*).<sup>441</sup> Some of them even pretend to live without eating but enjoy good nutrition behind the scenes.<sup>442</sup> They treat Guru Granth Sahib as an idol. The Gurus did not intend to make the Granth into an object of worship like the Hindu statues. Right from the time of Guru Nanak the Guru of the Sikhs has been the Shabad (Word) or the message conveyed to the world through the 'Word'.

Gurbani says, "I am a sacrifice to the Guru who has directed me to God. By putting the collyrium (of knowledge through the 'Word') in my eyes he has enabled me to understand God's law."<sup>443</sup> Some self-opinionated *Sants* have even gone a step further and virtually declared themselves as Gurus.<sup>444</sup> They are introducing forbidden rituals (picture worship, worshipping graves, fasts, penances and issuing amulets etc) and propagating myths, which go against the grain of the Sikh philosophy. They call their rituals *Sewa* little realising that *Sewa* of the Guru has been defined by the Guru himself as "*comprehension of the Guru's word and the obliteration of Haumain*"<sup>445</sup> It was *Sants* like these whom Kabir equated with Cheats.<sup>446</sup>

---

ਉਪਰ ਉੱਠੇ ਸੰਤ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਦੋ ਜਹਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਵੀ ਰੋਲੇ ਰੱਪੇ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਵਾ ਕੁਛ ਨਹੀਂ ॥ "(ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>438</sup> ਭਾਗੁ ਹੋਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਸੰਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੭) ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸੰਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਧਰਿ ਕੈ ਹਥੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੮)

<sup>439</sup> ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਮਿਲਿ ਮੰਗਲ ਗਾਏ, ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਆਪਿ ਸਵਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੭੪) ਸੰਤ ਸਜਨ ਸਿਖ ਭਏ ਸੁਹੇਲੇ, ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਿਉ ਲੈ ਮੇਲੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੦)

<sup>440</sup> ਭੇਖ ਕਰੈ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਚਿਤੁ ਡੋਲੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਕਰੇਧੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੨) ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੇਖ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਮਨੂਆ ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਧਾਵੈ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਬਿਆਪਿਆ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੂਨੀ ਆਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੨) ਬਾਹਰਹੁ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਜੀਅਹੁ ਤ ਮੈਲੇ ਤਿਨੀ ਜਨਮੁ ਜੂਐ ਹਾਰਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੧੯)

<sup>441</sup> The *Sants* have invented so many types of Paaths. For example *Sadharan Paath*, *Sadharan happy Occasion Paath*, *Sadharan learning Paath*, *Akhand Paath*, *Sampat Paath*, *Akhand Sampat Paath*, *Sadharan Sampat Paath*, *Saptahak*, *Katha Parman*, *Paath Dasam Granth*, *Akhand Paath Dasam Granth*, *Sampat Paath Dasam Granth* etc (See *Rehat Maryada* published by Damdami Taksal page 247 for details). The *Sants* do not accept the *Rehat Maryada* published by the SGPC. Every *San* publishes his own *Rehat Maryada*. They have turned reading of the Granth into a ritual and a *Paath* can even be purchased.

<sup>442</sup> ਜਗ ਕਉ ਬਕਤੋ ਦੁਪਾਧਾਰੀ ਗੁਪਤੀ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਵਟਿਕਾ ਸਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੩) ਕਰੇ ਦੁਹਕਰਮ ਦਿਖਾਵੈ ਹੋਰਾਰਾਮ ਕੀ ਦਰਗਹ ਬਾਧਾ ਚੋਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯੪) ਅੰਤਰੁ ਮਨਿ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੀਨਾ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੇਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੫)

<sup>443</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਿਟਹੁ ਵਾਰਿਆ ਜਿਤੁ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਖਸਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਿਆ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਇਨ੍ਹੀ ਨੇਤ੍ਰੀ ਜਗਤੁ

For the Sikhs their Guru's instruction is like the company of a pious *Sant*.<sup>447</sup> In the final analysis the Guru attaches more importance to deed than to creed and our modern day *sants* care little for deeds. Many modern day *Sants* are dominated by political ambition to the detriment of their spiritual devotion, which according to Sikhism must take precedence.

It was about such self-styled self-righteous false *Sants* that the Gurus said, “*If the saint is himself spiritually destitute, how can the follower be satiated?*”<sup>448</sup> It cannot be imagined that the Guru pleaded before God to make him the dust of the feet of such *Sants* when he wrote, “*Thy slave Nanak seeks thy blessing. Make me the dust of the feet of the Sants.*”<sup>449</sup> Bhai Gurdas warns the Sikhs to be on guard against impostors and not to fall a prey to such thug *Sants* when he writes:

“ਗੁਛਾ ਹੋਏ ਪਿਰਕਾਣੂਆਂ ਕਿਉ ਵੜੀਐ ਦਾਖੈ ॥ ਅਕੈ ਸੇਤੀ ਖਖੜੀ ਕੋਈ ਅੰਬ ਨ ਆਖੈ  
ਗਹਣੇ ਜਿਉ ਜ਼ਰਪੋਸ਼ ਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੋਇਨ ਸਾਖੈ ॥ ਫਟਕ ਨ ਪੁਜਨਿ ਹੀਰਿਆਂ ਓਇ ਭਰੈ ਬਿਆਖੈ॥  
ਧਉਲੇ ਦਿਸਨਿ ਛਾਹਿ ਦੁਪੁ ਸਾਦੁਹ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਖੈ ॥ ਤਿਉ ਸਾਧ ਅਸਾਧ ਪਰਖੀਅਨਿ ਕਰਤੂਤਿ ਸੁਭਾਖੈ”  
(B.Gurdas.War 37 Pauri VI. 17)

## 14.2 Sants or swindlers?

---

ਨਿਹਿਲਿਆ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੦)

<sup>444</sup> ਅਸੰਤੁ ਅਨਾਤੀ ਕਦੇ ਨਾ ਬੂਝੈ॥ ਕਥਨੀ ਕਰੇ ਤੈ ਮਾਇਆ ਨਾਲਿ ਲੂਝੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੬੦)

<sup>445</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਸਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ, ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰੇ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੩) ਇਹੁ ਸ਼ੀਰੁ ਕਰਮ ਕੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਥਿ ਮਥਿ ਤਤੁ ਕਢਈਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩੪). This body is for action. Gurmukhs churn Gurbani to understand the essence.

<sup>446</sup> ਗਲੀ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਜਪਮਾਲੀਆ ਲੋਟੇ ਹਥਿ ਨਿਬਗ ॥ ਉਹ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਤ ਨ ਆਖੀਐ ਬਾਨਾਰਸ ਕੇ ਠਗ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੬) Tulsi Das wrote, “ਜੇ ਜਨਮੇ ਕਲਿਕਾਲ ਕਰਾਲਾ। ਕਰਤਬ ਬਾਯਸ ਬੋਸ ਮਰਾਲਾ॥ ਧੀਗ ਧਰਮਧਵਜ ਧੰਧਕ ਧੋਰੀ ॥= “ਇਹ ਜੋ ਕਲਜੁਗ ਵਿਚ ਜੰਮੇ ਸਾਧ ਹਨ ਸਭ ਪਾਪੀ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਕਾਵਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਵੇਸ ਹੰਸ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ ॥ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਝੰਡਾ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਦੰਡੀ ਨੂੰ ਧਿੱਕਾਰ ਹੈ। (ਤੁਲਸੀ ਦਾਸ) For authentic information about some modern so-called *Sants* read “ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੌਤਕ” ਲੇਖਕ ਸੁਖਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਰਾ. For qualities of real *Sants* read Guru Granth Sahib page 1357 ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੰ ਧ੍ਰੁਨੰ ਸਰਬਤ੍ਰ ਪੂਰਨਹ .....

<sup>447</sup> ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਿਨਸਿਓ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਤਾਪੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੧੭) ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਣਕ ਸੇਵੇ ਸਿਖੁ ਸੁ ਖੋਜਿ ਲਹੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੨੮)

<sup>448</sup> ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਨੰਗਾ ਭੁਖਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਿਸ ਦਾ ਨਫਰੁ ਕਿਬਹੁ ਰਜਿ ਖਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੬) “ਲਿਬਾਸਿ ਖਿਜਰ ਮੇਂ ਯਾਂ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਰਾਹਜਨ ਭੀ ਫਿਰਤੇ ਹੈਂ, ਅਗਰ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਮੇਂ ਰਹਿਨਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕੁਛ ਪਹਿਚਾਨ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ”=ਸਾਧਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੋਖ ਵਿਚ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਚੋਰ ਹਨ ਬਚਣਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਤੁਰ ॥

<sup>449</sup> ਨਾਨਕੁ ਦਾਸੁ ਇਹੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਮਾਗੈ ਮੇਂ ਕਉ ਕਰਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਧੂਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੦੫)

No human being can grant another human being a child.<sup>450</sup> Yet some modern day *Sants* claim to have this power. Our Gurus never granted any child to anyone but only prayed to God for everything. Since the Gurus were spiritually extremely high in the order of merit, their prayers may have been very effective.

The true *Gurus* and *Bhagats* do not ordinarily pray for worldly things to show their spiritual might or greatness. If this were so, Guru Nanak would have compelled God to grant a child to Bibi Nanaki who remained childless all through her life.

Some people even visit the graves of dead Muslim *Sants* asking for the fulfilment of their desires. This is simply ridiculous.<sup>451</sup> If God listened to those *Sants* and favoured their word He would not have caused their death.

Stories of religious people granting children are recorded in hagiographical literature, which abounds in myths and miracles not approved by Gurbani. The chants, amulets, incantations etc are nothing but tricks to hoodwink the gullible people. *Sants* cannot subvert the laws of nature.<sup>452</sup>

ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣੁ ਉਸ ਹੀ ਕਉ ਹੈ ਰੇ ਓਹਾ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਈ ॥੩॥ (੯੯੯-੧੮)

---

<sup>450</sup> ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣੁ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨ ) । ਜੰਮਣ ਮਰਣਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਤਿਨਿ ਕਰਤੇ ਕੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੦) ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧੨)

<sup>451</sup> ਦਾਦੂ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਬਾਵਰੀ ਮਤੀਆਂ ਪੂਜਣ ਉਤ, ਜਿਹਤੇ ਆਪ ਜਹਾਨੋਂ ਲਦ ਗਏ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਣੇ ਪੂਤ (ਸੰਤ ਦਾਦੂ ਦਿਆਲ)

<sup>452</sup> ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਤੇ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪਖੰਡੀ, ਦੰਡੀ, ਸਵਾਰਥੀ, ਕਾਮੀ ਤੇ ਲੋਭੀ ਹੀ ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਅੱਡੇ ਜਮਾਈ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਚੇ ਸਾਧੂ ਦਾ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਕਠਨ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਗੁਰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਇਕੱਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੀ ਸਰੋਸ਼ਟ ਤੇ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ਸਤਿਸੰਗ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰੂ ਗਿਆਨ SGPC Amritsar ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਨਿਤਿਆ ਨੰਦ ਜੀ )

## Chapter Fifteen

### Revelation

Since their birth on this planet human beings have been struggling with nature. Over the centuries, thinkers have studied nature and have carefully examined air, water, fire, insects, animals, vegetation, and humans and have concluded that there must be some power, which controls all this. Such speculation proceeding from the known (nature प्रकृति) to the unknown (God) produced a belief, which can be called natural religion. One of the originators of such beliefs was the Greek philosopher Anaxagoras who was captivated by the order, purpose and design in the universe and imagined a universal intelligence behind it. Other Greek thinkers like Aristotle (384-322 BC), Plato (427-348 BC) and Socrates (470-401 BC) supported this view. Later many others like Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677 AD) and Descartes (1596-1650 AD) joined the bandwagon.

*“In the Rig Veda we have the impassioned utterances of primitive but poetic souls which seek some refuge from the obstinate questings of sense and outward things. The hymns are philosophical to the extent that they attempt to explain the mysteries of the world not by means of any superhuman insight or extraordinary revelation but by the light of unaided reason.”*(Dr. Radhakrishnan – Indian Philosophy Vol 1 p.71).

This brings us to the second type of religion that of superhuman insight as mentioned above by Dr. Radhakrishnan. The urge for starting this type of religion originates from God, who reveals his secrets to his closest followers with instruction to make His Will (*Hukam*) current in the world. Such followers are known as *Peers*, Prophets, or *Gurus*. The attributes of God and His Will are ontological (abstract) and cannot be understood or explained in simple terminology. Revelation of these attributes is a subjective mental phenomenon known only to the *Gurus* or *peers* themselves, who explain it as best they can. We either accept their imaginative spiritual experiences or reject them but we cannot question

their validity or disprove them.

There are many types of Gurus and *peers* but four of them are common.

- (1) A human being appears on earth and claims that he is God or God's son. Hindu God Krishna<sup>453</sup> and Christ fall in this category.
- (2) A human being claims that God called him into His presence and entrusted a message. He then instructed him to preach that message to the world. We can place Jewish Prophet Moses in this category. He claimed that he was called to a burning bush where God spoke to him and handed over the proverbial Ten Commandments.
- (3) There are other prophets whom God contacted through a messenger, entrusted them his message and asked them to spread it. Prophet Muhammad is said to have regularly received messages for 22 years between 610-632 AD in this fashion from angel Gabriel. In this case Prophet Muhammad is considered only a conduit through which the message is spread.
- (4) In the fourth type a Godman appears, claims direct spiritual enlightenment, attributes everything to God, lives and works according to God's *Hukam* and preaches his ideas in God's name. He remains spiritually attuned with God and claims to translate God's *Hukam* in his own words to make it intelligible to ordinary human beings. He declines to change his utterances, which he claims are inspired by God. Guru Nanak's religion is a revealed religion and the Guru claims direct rapport with God. "The propitious word of the Lord dawned on me. My ego disappeared and I began to see the Lord all around" (AGGS P.628)<sup>454</sup>

All four types have one thing in common. They all believe in the existence

<sup>453</sup> ਯਦਾ ਯਦਾ ਹਿ ਧਰਮਸਯ ਗਿਲਾਨਿਰ ਭਵਤੀ ਭਾਰਤੀ, ਅਭੁੱਥਿਆਨਮ ਤਾਦਾਤਮਾਨਮ ਸਰਜਾਮਹਮ "Whenever evil spreads I take birth in the world" Lord Krishna in Gita. See also Dyanand's "light of Asia" Page 222.

<sup>454</sup> ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ ॥ ਸੋ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਜੋ ਪੇਖਿਹਿ ਆਖੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪) Hear the True facts from the spiritually enlightened people. They (The Sikh Gurus) convey only what they see with their own eyes. ਇਹ ਪੂਰਨ ਹਰਿ ਧਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪੁ ਮਿਟਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੮). The Sikh Gurus do not claim that the Granth is written by God or was sent down as a gift to humanity as the Muslims do. The Hindus too call the Vedas *Apaurashya* (not made by man). Guru Granth Sahib is the result of the Guru's mystical encounter with divine reality through consciousness. The process cannot be fully understood by ordinary human beings through their inadequate spiritual acumen or inquisitive mental cogitation. The Guru himself tells us "ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੈ ਮਹਲਿ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ" (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੦)

of God and uphold morality in their own way. Whereas natural religion is impermanent and is always in a flux, the revealed religion is unchangeable.

Some western scholars of Sikhism attach their deep-felt prejudices to the study of Sikhism and put it in the category of natural religions. Some others consider Sikhism as a tradition and not a new religion. They call it a rehash of effete Hindu creed in which Nanak grew up from birth.<sup>455</sup> Yet others like Dr. Trumpp say that Guru Nanak picked up pieces of information from the Hindu and Islamic scriptures and created a syncretism called Sikhism. They are attempting to prove that Guru Nanak was not a Godman or a Guru. Mr. Macauliffe has, however, stated emphatically that Sikhism is a true religion in its own right, has exclusive ideology, and is perfect.

Westerners apply their own notions of Christianity and pre-conditioned minds to irresistibly foist their own prejudices on Sikhism. Their study of Sikhism is anything but satisfactory. Some of them apply scientific and inappropriate methodology to unravel the mysteries of religion. Logic and empirical proofs cannot fathom the notions of Truth, beauty, peace and compassion etc. Visionary experiences defy empirical verification, quantification or dissection for scientific studies. Since the existence of God cannot be proved, scientific analysis of revelation will simply turn a person atheist.

Another mistake the western writers deliberately appear to be making is that they mix hagiology with religion little realising that hagiology can at best be classified a part of history written by devotees from a pre-conceived view of life. The writers of the Guru period were not scientifically trained to comprehend and explain religion and neither did they receive education on scientific lines. Their writings cannot be passed as authentic exposition of religion or a part of it. Since hagiology is a part of the Bible, the western scholars while studying Sikhism sub-consciously mix it with *Janam Sakhis* and other hagiographic literature produced by various Sikh and non-Sikh writers in the post-Guru period. The ideology of *Janam Sakhis* does not agree with the authentic scripture, which in the case of the Sikhs is *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Guru Granth Sahib* does not contain mythical stories and unbelievable parables like the Bible so the

---

<sup>455</sup> "Mere metaphysical notions founded on the abstractions of Soafceism (Sufism?) and the Vedant philosophy" (Mills *History of India* vii, 102). The Granth is "A compound of mystical absurdities" Baron Hugel *Travels* p.283.

western writers import such matter from the *Janam Sakhi* literature and pass it on as Sikhism.

It is beyond the purview of this book to discuss this point in any greater detail. The reader is advised to study the sacred *Guru Granth Sahib* and satisfy his curiosity on the issue. It is however, worth noting that whereas the other prophets claimed rapport with God only when they had attained adulthood, Guru Nanak claimed it at the very young age of six when he went to school and composed his first hymn (Patti Likhi). No other Prophet in the world has claimed communication with God in his childhood or started demonstrating his concern for humanity at such a tender age. Again no other prophet challenged the established religious practices as Guru Nanak did by declining to accept *janeu* (Hindu religious thread) at an early age. Not a single religious leader ventured outside his own country to preach his religion as did Guru Nanak.

A revelation is consubstantial (of one and the same substance) with divinity. It is a projection or eternalisation of the Divine. Only a person fully attuned with God's revelation under the influence of His Divine Spirit can compose an inspired text like *Guru Granth Sahib*. Such 'Word' therefore transcends its human and terrestrial limitations and is the direct and tested path to God.

Every word of the sacred *Guru Granth Sahib* proclaims mystical spirituality and wisdom, which cannot but be Godly and revealed.

## Chapter Sixteen

### Originality of Sikhism

During the nineteenth century the colonial officials and Christian Missionaries, whose intention was to discredit Sikhism and transplant it with Christianity, deliberately floated the idea that Sikhism is a copy of Hinduism.<sup>456</sup> They strained every nerve to contrast the imagined pacifism of Guru Nanak with the supposed militancy of Guru Har Gobind and Guru Gobind Singh. They weaved criticism and unsubstantiated remarks around their assumed stand. Some unscrupulous people were on the look out for such an opportunity and started justifying these conclusions on the following lines.

1. The Sikhs came out of the Hindus. All Gurus were Khatri Hindus.

*“Surrounded during his childhood by Hindu influences, Gobind Rai succeeded to his office under every temptation to remain within the pale of orthodox Hinduism”* (Rose Vol.1 p.694)

2. The Gurus have used Hindu vocabulary and concepts.
3. Gurbani is a summary of the Vedas.<sup>457</sup>
4. Hindu gods such as Ram, Hari and Krishna are mentioned in the Granth.
5. Sikhism is a continuation of Sant (Bhagti) movement

In 1897 Lala Thakur Das and Bawa Narain Singh wrote a book titled *“Sikh Hindu Hain.”* This book created a lot of controversy.<sup>458</sup>

<sup>456</sup> “Sikhism we are told, is a sect of Hinduism. Guru Nanak, born a Hindu, he remained one until the day he died, and so too his successors”. (The Sikhs 1989 Columbia University Press page 16)

<sup>457</sup> About Hindu scriptures and their writers Swami Ram Tirath Dandi Sanyasi, himself a Hindu, writes, “ਉਹ ਤਤ ਦੀ ਸਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦੇ, ਉਹ ਔਝੜੀਂ ਪਏ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਹ ਦਸੇਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ ॥ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਫੈਲਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਤ੍ਰਿਗੁਣਾਤਮਕ ਮਾਯਾਵਾਦੀ ਭਰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸਿਆ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਅਗਿਆਨ-ਨੀਂਦਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਘੁਕ ਸੁੱਤਾ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਅਚੇਤਨ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਫੈਲੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। (ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੪)

<sup>458</sup> Swami Dyanand wrote “Satiarath Parkash” in which he insulted the Sikh Gurus. Now there is a flood of such books specially sponsored by RSS. Read “Guru Nanak and Hindu heritage” by Dr. K.L.Rao or “ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੱਕ” by Dr.Arvind Sadashiv Godbole. RSS have recently started a magazine titled “Rawani” to attack Sikhism.



We will discuss this issue here briefly but before we do so, we should be clear what Hindu stands for and what is Hinduism.

## 16.1 Origin of the word Hindu?

The word “Hindu” is not found in the Vedas or any other Hindu religious book and neither is it Aryan by descent.<sup>459</sup> Muslim invaders used this word contemptuously and disdainfully for the Indian people.<sup>460</sup> Its origin has been traced back to Persian roots.

For our purpose we would define Hindu as somebody who believes in Vedas, Puranas and Simirities.<sup>461</sup> The four Vedas are considered the source of Hinduism.<sup>462</sup> In course of time six different interpretations of the Vedas gave rise to six different religious groups. They were (1) Vedant (2) Vaishnav (3) Shiv (4) Sakat (5) Brahman and (6) Adwait. Most often they contradicted each other. For example Vaishnavas are vegetarians but some other Hindu sects are meat-eaters and have been so for centuries.<sup>463</sup> Some worship fire others worship statues (of Ram Chandra and Krishna etc). There are myriads of sects worshipping snakes, rats, phallus, fire, air, cows, and trees etc as gods.

---

<sup>459</sup> The word ‘Hindu’ was not in use in India before Muhammad Bin Qasim’s attack on India in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The question about its meaning was first raised in 1920 when 45 learned Brahmins of Benares had concluded that the word “Hindu” is a Muslim word therefore it is not proper to be called a “Hindu” Hindu leader Swami Dyanand did not like this word and suggested that the word ‘Arya’ should be used instead of ‘Hindu’.

<sup>460</sup> In Persian/Arabic it means a thief, a dishonest person or a cheat. Professor Sher Singh was taken to High court at Chandigarh on 27 January 1984 (F.I.R No. 40) for interpreting “Hindu” like this. “Universal Religion” (1952) by R.N. Suraya Narain, “ਮਹਾਂ ਰਿਸ਼ੀ ਦਿਆਨੰਦ ਸਰਸੋਤੀ ਔਰ ਉਨ ਕਾ ਕਾਮ” by Lala Lajpat Rai, “Annihilation of Castes” by Dr. Ambedkar and many other sources were quoted in the court. The Judge also consulted Persian Dictionary ‘Lughat-e-Kishwari’ Lucknow page 615 which confirmed the meanings of ‘Hindu’. The case against professor Sher Singh was dismissed.

<sup>461</sup> This definition was given by Swami Vivekanand when he visited Chicago in 1893AD. He disliked calling the religion ‘Hindu’ and suggested that it should be called Vedic religion.

<sup>462</sup> Strangely most Hindus consider Ram Chandra as a foremost Hindu prophet (originator or founder) but his name does not appear in any of the four Vedas.

<sup>463</sup> ਗੈਡਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ 1289) ਘੋੜਾ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਅਸ਼ਵਮੇਧ ਯੱਗ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਝੋਟੇ ਅਤੇ ਬਕਰੇ ਦੀ ਬਲੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਗੋਮੇਧ ਯੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਾਂ ਮਾਰੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ। (ਪੜ੍ਹੋ ‘ਗੀਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਚਨ’ by Vinoba Bhave) ਨਰ-ਮੇਧ ਯੱਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਲੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ। ਵਿਆਹ ਵੇਲੇ ਗਾਂ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ “ਮਾਤਾ ਰੁਦਰਾਣੀ” ਆਦਿ ਮੰਤਰ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਬਹੂ ਨੂੰ ਖਵਾਉਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਸੀ। ਅਜ ਕਲ੍ਹ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਲਈ ਕੇਵਲ ਤਿਠਕਾ ਕਟਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ “ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਛਿਪਯਾਦਿ” ਦੀ ਰਸਮ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ (ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭ ਤੇ ੮੩). ਵੇਦ ਵਿਆਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸੂਤਰ” ਦੇ ਤੀਸਰੇ ਅਧਿਆਏ ਦਾ ਹਵਾਲਾ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਦੰਡੀ ਸਨਿਆਸੀ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ, “ਬਕਰੇ ਦੇ, ਗਧੇ ਦੇ, ਘੋੜੇ ਦੇ, ਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਮਾਸ ਦਾ ਖਾ ਲੈਣਾ ਇਹ ਧਰਮ ਵੇਦ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੋਣੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਨਾਤਨ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ”। (ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨)

## 16.2 Definition of Hinduism?

Hinduism is a great religion and majority of Indians are Hindus. Unfortunately every effort to define Hinduism has failed. According to Mr. W.Crooke, *“No problem is more difficult than that of framing a definition of Hinduism.”* In the same strain Mr. Macnicol writes, *“The question, what is Hinduism, is one to which no one is likely ever to be able to give a simple or quite intelligible answer. It has no creed summing up authoritatively its tenets. It has no historical personality at its centre whose life dates its beginning that can be discerned. .... It is an amalgam of often contradictory beliefs and practices, held together in one by certain powerful ideas and by a system of social regulations.”* According to Sir Alfred Lyall Hinduism *“is a troubled sea without shore or visible horizon, driven to and fro by the winds of boundless credulity and grotesque invention.”*<sup>464</sup>

It is not only the non-Hindus who find it difficult to define Hinduism. Trying to define it, the Hindu Philosopher Dr. S. Radha Krishnan (ex President of India) is equally confused. He writes: *“To many it seems to be a name without any content. Is it a museum of beliefs, a medley of rites, or a mere map, a geographical expression? Its content, if it has any, has altered from age to age; from community to community. It meant one thing in the Vedic period, another in the Brahmanical and a third in the Buddhist. It seems one thing to the Saivite, another to the vaishnavite, a third to the sakta.”*(The Hindu view of life P.12) All we can safely conclude from this discussion is that Hinduism is a heterogeneous intermixture of disjointed and sometimes contradictory ideas. In the strictest sense of the word it is not a religion but a set of diverse polytheistic beliefs and practices.

## 16.3 Is Sikhism a copy of Hinduism?

Any reader who has studied Sikhism would know that the above remarks by various people do not apply to Sikhism, which started with a historical personality and has a definite set of principles unchanged since the time of its preceptor. In spite of this Mahatma Gandhi wrote, *“My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all Hindus. I do not regard Sikhism as a*

<sup>464</sup> ਕਾਹੂ ਲੈ ਪਾਹਨ ਪੂਜ ਧਰਯੋ ਸਿਰ, ਕਾਹੂ ਲੈ ਲਿੰਗ ਗਰੇ ਲਟਕਾਇਓ । ਕਾਹੂ ਲਖਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਅਵਾਚੀ ਦਿਸਾ ਮਹਿ, ਕਾਹੂ ਪਛਾਹ ਕੋ ਸੀਸ ਨਿਵਾਇਓ । ਕੋਊ ਬੁਤਾਨ ਕੋ ਪੂਜਤ ਹੈ ਪਸ, ਕੋਊ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਾਨ ਕੋ ਪੂਜਨ ਧਾਇਓ । ਕੂਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਉਰਝਿਓ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਜਗ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਕੋ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ॥ (ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

*religion distinct from Hinduism. I regard it as a part of Hinduism and the reformation in the same sense that vaishnavism is.* “(Young India dated 1.10.1925)

We will now take up the issues raised by those who call Sikhism a copy of Hinduism.

#### 1. The Gurus were born in a Hindu family

The argument that since Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family and moved among Hindu *Saints* he must have acquired spiritual instruction from a Hindu, does not make him a Hindu. It is erroneous to associate a person with the religion of his parents or teachers. Christ was born in a Jewish family but nobody calls him a Jew. Gautama Buddha was born in a Hindu family and was instructed by Hindu teachers but he was not a Hindu. All Muslims of India were once Hindus but nobody calls them Hindus now. Nostradamus was born in a Jewish family but died as a Christian.

As for birth, where could Guru Nanak have taken birth other than a Hindu family? There were only Hindus and Muslims in his time. If he were not born a Hindu he would still be a non-Sikh (Muslim, Buddh or Jain by birth).

## 2. The Gurus used Hindu vocabulary

The argument is fallacious. Languages do not belong to any particular religion. Any religious leader can use any language that the people understand. No religious leader in the world has ever invented a new language and a new vocabulary to preach his new religion. It is only natural for anybody to use the vocabulary of the language spoken around him and learnt by him from his parents and teachers. Islam has borrowed terminology from Christianity and Judaism but it will be wrong to say that Islam is a copy of those religions. It is interesting to know that Hindus call Guru Nanak a Hindu for using Hindu terminology and Muslims call him Muslim for using Persian and Arabic vocabulary.<sup>465</sup> He has used thousands of Persian and Arabic words like Shaikh, Malik, Azrael, Dozakh, Rasool, Lehbar, Musalman, Khuda, Allah, Rahim, Karim, Malaoon, Khaliq, Razaq, Sharik, Haq, Pak and Namaz etc, which are an anathema to the Hindus. Would the use of such Islamic vocabulary make him a Muslim?<sup>466</sup> The Indian Hindus use thousands of English words like rail, ticket, signal, school, college, library, pen, pencil, button etc. can we call them English (or Christian?). The detractors forget that the Sikh Gurus have themselves declared that they are “neither Hindu nor Muslim” (GGS P.1136).<sup>467</sup>

Malik Muhammad Jaisi wrote in Hindi all his life and used Hindu concepts, Hindi language and Hindi vocabulary but no Hindu has ever accepted him as a brother Hindu.

---

<sup>465</sup> Read “Sat Bachan” by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed. Also read Hughes dictionary of Islam P.3, 6,30,124. *Sewapanthis* and *Adanshahi* Sikhs have utilised Persian mystical writings such as *Masnavi* of Jalal-ud-din Rumi. Imam Ghazali’s “*Keemaya-e- Suadat* ” was translated by them as ਪਾਰਸ ਭਾਗ to propagate Sikhism among Muslims. “*The use of Islamic terms certainly does not guarantee an Islamic content (Dr.C.Shackel)* It is interesting to note that the two diametrically opposing religions (Hinduism and Islam) both claim that Sikhism is a copy of their religions. Christians are not far behind.

<sup>466</sup> It is worth noting that Hindus in general and Vaishnava *Saints* in particular did not like foreign languages and considered only Sanskrit as “Dev Bhasha”. For example Namdev suffered tortures but did not utter “Khuda”(Islamic word for God) “ਰੁਦਨੁ ਕਰੈ ਨਾਮੇ ਕੀ ਮਾਇ ॥ ਛੋਡਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਕੀ ਨ ਭਜਹਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੬੬). ਮਲੇਛ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਕਦੇ ਨਾ ਸਿਖੇ (ਵਸਿਸ਼ਟ ਸੰਹਿਤਾ ਅਧਿਆਯ:੬)

<sup>467</sup> ਵਰਤ ਨ ਰਹਉ ਨ ਮਹ ਰਮਦਾਨਾ ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵੀ ਜੋ ਰਖੈ ਨਿਦਾਨਾ ॥ ਏਕੁ ਗੁਸਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਨੇਬੇਰਾ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਹਜ ਕਾਬੈ ਜਾਉ ਨ ਤੀਰਥ ਪੂਜਾ ॥ ਏਕੋ ਸੇਵੀ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ ॥ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਉ ਨ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਉ ॥ ਏਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਲੇ ਰਿਦੈ ਨਮਸਕਾਰਉ ॥ ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥ ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਪਰਾਨ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੬)

### 3. The Gurus used Hindu Concepts

McLeod says that Guru Nanak only regurgitated the Hindu religious ideas prevalent in his time and did not lay the foundation of a different religion. He writes, *“Guru Nanak may have founded a new panth or religious community within the larger Hindu fold, but he neither violated nor abandoned the Hindu tradition. Born a Hindu, he remained one until the day he died, and so too did his successors.....Nanak did not found Sikhism for this would have meant founding something which already existed.”* (‘The Sikhs’ page 16) It is ironic that the Hindu priests treated Guru Nanak as an outcaste and a heathen for declining to wear a *Janeu*, a necessary adjunct for Hindus, and yet Mr. McLeod says that Guru Nanak preached nothing new but Hinduism.

Every new religion relies on the current language and religious concepts and uses them as points of reference giving them new interpretations. It is true that Guru Nanak inherited all the wisdom of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Muslim thinkers before him but it does not mean that he gave us nothing new. Such a statement can be made about any religious leader of the world because some of his ideas and vocabulary can be traced back to other religions. Christianity did not invent any new language, vocabulary or concepts but used the same language and concepts as were prevalent among the Jews. Later Islam did the same. Religious terms like Guru, Nam, Bhana, Gurmukh, Shabad, *Anhad nad*, Mukti, Sadhu, Ram, Pun and Paap etc are indeed used both in Hinduism and Sikhism but their meanings and the concepts behind them are not the same. Some Hindu concepts like heaven, hell, and sin etc match with similar concepts in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism but we cannot call them anything other than Hindus.

New religious leaders always give new interpretations to old established concepts. For example the word “Allah” was used for a ‘statue’ before Prophet Muhammad’s advent but afterwards it began to be used for God and Muslims became iconoclasts. The same thing applies to the Hindu concepts borrowed by the Sikh Gurus from the Vedas and other religious books. For example take the concept of “the Bull” which according to Hindus supports the earth.<sup>468</sup> The Guru interpreted it as “Dharma” instead of an animal. The Hindus have numerous *Devtas* (gods) like Varuna, Mitra, Surya, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Agni, Indra, Rudra, Usha and numerous more mentioned in the Vedas but the Sikhs believe only in one God.

#### 4. Sikhism and the Vedas

*“The Granth Sahib of the Sikhs is actually based on the Hindu scriptures”.*(Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi page 284)

To call Guru Granth Sahib based on the Hindu scriptures is a pre-judgement and is absolutely wrong. Except for some ideas about God, which can be traced in any religion, the two have nothing much in common. Two prominent Hindu scholars have differentiated Guru Granth Sahib from the Hindu scriptures step by step. One of them is Swami Ram Tirath Dandi Sanyasi (who later accepted Sikhism) and wrote a book titled, “The best scripture, Guru Granth Sahib.” The other one is Swami Maheshwara Nand Mahan Mandleshwar who wrote *Chaturwarnya Bhartya Sameeksha*.<sup>469</sup>

<sup>468</sup> According to another Hindu belief there are eight elephants supporting the earth at eight different points. Their names are *Anjan, Sarvbhom, Vaman, Kumud, Pushpdant, Pundrik, Airavat and Supratik*. Below them in the nether world there are other elephants to support them. Their names are *Bhadra, Mahapadma, Saumanas and Virupakh*. All of them are jointly known as Digaj (ਦਿਗਜ਼)

<sup>469</sup> The first of these books is now available in Panjabi translation (ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ) published by Gurmat Sahit Charitable Trust Amritsar. The second book is in Sanskrit. In part two it carries a chapter on Guru Gobind Singh titled *Bhartya Veeragargnayo Gobind Singh*. No one has differentiated Sikhism from Hinduism better than these two scholars. ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਕਾ ਕਿਆ ਗੁਨੁ ਖਰ ਚੰਦਨ ਜਸ ਭਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੦੨) ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਬੇਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਪਰਗਾਸੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹ ਪਸਾਰਾ ॥ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਵਰਤੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਤਾਮਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਾ ॥ ਕਿਸਨੁ ਸਦਾ ਅਵਤਾਰੀ ਰੂਪਾ ਕਿਤੁ ਲਗਿ ਤਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੯) ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਾਸਣਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਜਮ ਕਾ ਭਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਜਮੁ ਨ ਛੋਡੈ ਬਹੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਵਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੯) ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਗੁਣ ਬਧਕ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨਿਰਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ) ਮਹਿਮਾ ਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਬੇਦ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਭੇਦ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪) Do such statements prove that Sikhs are Hindus? Brahma, Krishan, Mahadeo and Inder are the most revered and commonly worshipped gods of the Hindus.

Hindu scriptures are numerous. There are more than a thousand Upanisads alone. These books do not reach one set philosophy which can be given one name. They are consistent only in contradicting each other. However it must be admitted that they provide a good source of information on how the Indians of yore developed their religious ideas at different times.

This topic has been discussed at length by Bhai Jodh Singh giving quotations from both Hindu and Sikh scriptures in his book titled “Guru Granth Sahib Ate Ved”(1911) and “Gurmat Nirnai” (1932). Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha has also written a book on the same topic titled “Ham Hindu Nahin”(1907).

## 5. The Gurus and the Sant Tradition

*“The belief system promulgated by the Sants was gaining widespread currency and Nanak could have absorbed its ideals from a variety of possible sources. The fact that he faithfully reproduces these doctrines sets him firmly within the Sant tradition, effectively destroying any claims to significant originality.”* (McLeod’The Sikhs page 23)

A casual reader of Sikhism can easily find that the goals and the procedures of the Sikh Gurus and those of the Hindu *Sants* were altogether different.

The Sikh Gurus were monotheists as opposed to Hindu *Sants* who believed in a multitude of gods (stones, snakes, sun, idols, trees, moon, rats, cows, rivers, Lakshmi, fire, Durga, Shivling etc).<sup>470</sup> The Hindu *Sants* considered the *Yagyas* sacred and very meritorious acts but the Sikh Gurus condemned them as wastage. It is indeed very odd that scholars like McLeod fail to grasp such glaring differences, which an ordinary reader does not fail to notice.

---

<sup>470</sup> Shiva’s sexual organ (Shivling) is worshipped by Shaiv Hindus. On the other hand the Sikhs are instructed to put their faith only in one God. ਏਕੋ ਸੇਵੀ ਸਦਾ ਬਿਰੁ ਸਾਚਾ॥ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਾਗਾ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਕਾਚਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੯)

The naked, ashes-clad Hindu Sadhu carrying a begging bowl and threatening people with esoteric powers is nowhere mentioned in Sikhism. The Sadhu of the Guru's concept does not believe in outward attire (swash-buckling ochre coloured overall and frontal mark) or ritual activity. He is a householder earning his living through honest work and sharing it with less fortunate members of society<sup>471</sup>. He neither threatens anybody nor feels cowed down by another's threats.<sup>472</sup> When the need falls he even picks up a sword to defend the righteous cause.<sup>473</sup> It is unbelievable that McLeod failed to notice all this.

All Hindu *Sants* (with a few exceptions) believed in caste system,<sup>474</sup> practised *Ahimsa*, hated women, supported *Sati* (co-cremation of widows with their dead husbands) and recommended pilgrimage to sacred rivers, whereas Guru Nanak disapproved all such practices. The Hindu *Sants* believed in the authority of the Vedas whereas Guru Nanak repudiated the Vedas, Upnishadas, and the Gita altogether.<sup>475</sup> According to Hinduism God takes birth in the form of *Avtars* but Sikhism does not accept this view.

The Hindus and especially the Hindu *Sants* do not have one set philosophy. Their belief systems are numerous i.e. atheism, theism, dwaitism, adwaitism, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Krishna worship, Rama Worship, Durga worship etc. This is clearly evident from the writings of Madhva, Tulsidas, Vallabh, Chaitanya, Rama Nand, numerous Simrities, Brahmanas and Upnishadas etc, which contradict each other. The Sikhs on the other hand believe in one God and one set of principles and that is why in Guru Nanak's religion we find a well-integrated and coherent systematised thought. "*They do not recite the Mantras of the Hindus, they do not venerate their temples, nor do they esteem their Avtars. The*

<sup>471</sup> ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣੇ ਸੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪੫)

<sup>472</sup> ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੭)

<sup>473</sup> ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰ ਧਰ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨)

<sup>474</sup> ਮਲੇਛ ਔਰ ਚੰਡਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲ ਨ ਕਰੇ (ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਤੀ ਅਧਿਆਯ:੬੪) ਮੂਰਖ ਹੋਵੇ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਅਨਪੜ੍ਹ ਹੋਵੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਵਡਾ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਹੈ । (ਮਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਤੀ ਅ:੯ ਸ਼ਲੋਕ ੩੪੭), ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਬਦ ਚਲਣ ਵੀ ਪੂਜਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ (ਪ੍ਰਾਸਰ ਸੰਹਿਤਾ ਅ:੬) The reason why there are only a few Brahman Sikhs is that the Brahmins are forbidden from being baptised by any of the lower three classes. The Sikh Gurus were Kashatryas and therefore the Brahmins did not accept baptism from Guru Gobind Singh in any significant numbers.

<sup>475</sup> ਮਹਿਮਾ ਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਬੇਦ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਭੇਦ ॥ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਅੰਤੁ ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬੇਅੰਤੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪ ) ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਬੇਦੁ ਬਕੈ ਖੜੋ ਭਾਈ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ॥ ਪਾਖੰਡਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਚੁਕਈ ਭਾਈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਵਿਕਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੫) ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਤਿ ਸੀਭ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਇਨ ਪਤਿਆ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੭) ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਤ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਪੁੰਨ ਪਾਪ ਬੀਚਾਰਦੇ ਤਤੈ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੦) "ਵੇਦ ਨਾਮਕ ਪੋਥੀਆਂ ਵੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ । ਵੇਦ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਪਰਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਹੈ ॥ ਜੋ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪਰਮ ਪਦ ਲਭਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਵੇਦ ਗਿਆਤਾ ਜਾਣਿਆਂ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ"। (ਬ੍ਰਹਤ ਪਰਾਸਰ ਸੰਹਿਤਾ ਅਧਿਆਯ ੪)



*Sanskrit language, which according to the Hindus is the language of the gods, is not held in such great estimation by the Sikhs.”(Dabistan-e-Mazahib by Mohsin Fani translated by David O Shea)*

The theories of the Hindu Nath Yogis (Shaiva and Vaishnavas), who were usually celibates, conflicted with those of Guru Nanak. Physical austerities, self-torture, self-denial and renunciation are all cardinal principles of Hindu *Sants*, which are condemned as fruitless by the Sikh Gurus. The goal of the Naths and Yogis and most other Hindu *Sants* was complete dissociation from the world through leading a monastic life (*Baan Prasth Ashram*) and thus gaining spiritual powers by wandering in jungles whereas the Guru's goal was to seek salvation while living a normal life in society.<sup>476</sup>

The Hindu *Sants* did not involve in worldly affairs, and neither did they stress the importance of social reformation. They were more interested in *Mukti* (salvation) after death whereas Sikhism believes in *Mukti* achievable '**here and now**'. The concept of *Jeevan-mukta*<sup>477</sup> was not their concern and the eradication of social evils, injustice, cruelty or political coercion and oppression did not bother them. No Hindu *Sant* spoke against foreign invaders but Guru Nanak stood as a rock against the powerful invader Babar and called him an aggressor, courted arrest and served imprisonment. In this connection Ms Dorothy Field writes,

*“Speaking generally, however, there was not sufficient combativeness among these earlier reformers to lead to the formation of a powerful new religion. They were too deeply imbued with poetic mysticism---with the spirit of quietism and toleration---to have much sympathy with aggressive ideals.”*

The Hindu saints “appear to have been so impressed with nothingness of this life, that they deemed the amelioration of man's social condition as unworthy of a thought. They aimed chiefly at emancipation from priestcraft, or from the grossness of idolatory and polytheism. They formed pious associations of contented quietists, or they gave themselves up to the contemplation of futurity in the hope of approaching bliss, rather than called upon their fellow creatures to throw aside every social as well as

<sup>476</sup> ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੋਲੇਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੇਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੇਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੨)

<sup>477</sup> “Matter and soul interact continually. The purer the mind, the freer the soul. In human form, the cooperation of the two can reach its highest. The state of best cooperation between matter and soul is the state of *Jivan Mukta*.”(Dr.Taran Singh ‘The Missionary Vol.1 No. 3 Page 146)

*religious trammel, and to raise a new people freed from debasing corruption of ages. They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations, and their sects remained to this day as they left them. It was reserved for Nanuk to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successor Govind to fire the mind of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed, in political as in religious hopes.”(J.D.Cunnigham A history of the Sikhs)*

## 6. Hindu gods are mentioned in the Granth Sahib

Regarding the mention of the names of Hindu gods, goddesses and historical Hindu personages in the Granth Sahib it should be noted that like all Indians the Gurus lived in India and inherited their language and culture from the past ancestors and forefathers of Indian people. Therefore naturally they mentioned the virtues<sup>478</sup> and shortcomings of past religious leaders but instead of worshipping them, they mentioned them as ordinary human beings with usual human weaknesses.<sup>479</sup>

Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Rama,<sup>480</sup> Ravana, Kans, Jashodha, Dhruv, Prahlad and many others are mentioned as a survival element of the prevalent religion and not as worshipful incarnations of God.<sup>481</sup> For example examine the following hymns:

<sup>478</sup> Guru Granth Sahib gives credit where it is due. For example Dhruv and Prahlad are praised for being sincere devotees of God without questioning whether they really existed or not. ਰਾਮੁ ਜਪਉ ਜੀਅ ਐਸੇ ਐਸੇ॥ ਧੂ ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦਿ ਜਪਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਜੈਸੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੭) and ਸਹਸਰਬਾਹੁ ਮਧੁਕੀਟ ਮਹਿਖਾਸਾ॥ ਹਰਣਾਖਸੁ ਨੇ ਨਖਹੁ ਬਿਧਾਸਾ॥ ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਅਭਿਆਸਾ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੪)

<sup>479</sup> ਰੋਵੈ ਜਨਮੇਜਾ ਖੁਇ ਗਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੪) ਰੋਵੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਨਿਕਾਲਾ ਭਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੩) ਰੋਵਹਿ ਪਾਂਡਹ ਭਏ ਮਜੂਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੪) ਪਾਰਜਾਤੁ ਗੋਪੀ ਲੈ ਆਇਆ ਬਿੰਦੂਬਨ ਮਹਿ ਰੰਗੁ ਕੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੦) ਰੋਗੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਸੁਰਦੁਰਾ ਰੋਗੀ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੩)॥ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮਹੇਸਰ ਬਿਸਨ ਸਚੀਪਤਿ ਅੰਤ ਫਸੈ ਜਮ ਫਾਸ ਪਰੈਗੇ (ਤਵ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸਵਯੰ ੮/੨੮)

<sup>480</sup> ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਹਿਤ ਜਿਨਹੋ ਅਵਤਾਰ, ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਤਨ ਧਾਰੇ ਸਾਰ॥ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਬਪ ਪੂਜਤ ਮਾਨਤ ,ਭਜਨ ਧਿਆਨ ਉਨ ਹੀ ਕਾ ਠਾਨਤ॥ ਸਿਖ ਉਨਹੋ ਪਰਮੇਸ ਨਾ ਮਾਨੈ, ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਜਾਨੈ॥ ( ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਅਧਯਾਯ ੭੪) Hindu gods and goddesses (Avatars) are mentioned in the Sikh scripture only as mortals like other human beings.

<sup>481</sup> ਕੋਟਿ ਬਿਸਨ ਕੀਨੇ ਅਵਤਾਰ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਧੁਮਸਾਲ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਮਹੇਸ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਮਾਏ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਜਗੁ ਸਾਜਣ ਲਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੭)॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਭੇਦ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੪) ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸੂ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਗੁਣਿ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੦੯)॥ਪਾਂਡੇ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਧਉਲੇ ਬਲਦ ਚੜਿਆ ਆਵਤੁ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਬਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੪) ਪਾਂਡੇ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਰਾਮਚੰਦੁ ਸੇ ਭੀ ਆਵਤੁ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਬਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੫) ਪਾਂਡੇ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਲੋਧੇ ਕਾ ਖੇਤੁ ਖਾਤੀ ਬੀ ... (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੪) ਪਾਂਡੇ ਤੂ ਜਾਣੈ ਹੀ ਨਾਰੀ ਕਿਬਹੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਉਪੰਨਾ ... (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯੦), ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅਨੇਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਤ ਏਕ ਨਾ ਮਾਨਯੋ॥ ਕਿਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਸੇ ਕੀਟ ਕੋਟੈ ਬਨਾਏ। ਕਿਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਸੇ ਮੇਟ ਡਾਰੇ ਉਪਾਏ ...॥, ਜਿਤੇ ਦੇਵ ਰਾਯੋ, ਸਭੈ ਅੰਤ ਜਾਯੋ ....॥ ਜਿਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਹੂਏ ਸਭੇ ਅੰਤ ਮੂਏ,ਜਿਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਹਵੈ, ਹੋ ਸਭੇ ਅੰਤ ਜੈ ਹੈ॥(ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

- (a) “Branded with a thousand marks of disgrace, *Indra* cried in shame. *Paras Raam* returned home crying. *Ajai* cried and wept when he was made to eat the manure he had given, pretending it was charity. Such is the punishment received in the Court of the Lord. *Rama* wept when he was sent into exile, and separated from *Sita and Lakhshman*. The ten-headed *Raawan*, who stole away Sita with the beat of his tambourine, wept when he lost Sri Lanka. The *Paandavas* once lived in the Presence of the Lord; they were made slaves, and wept. *Janmayjaa* wept because he had lost his way. One single mistake made him a sinner.”<sup>482</sup>
- (b) *Brahma* acted in pride, and did not reform. Only when he was faced with the problem of the Vedas did he repent. Remembering God in meditation, the mind is conciliated. Such is the horrible pride of the world. The Guru eliminates the pride of those who meet Him. *Bal* the King, steeped in mammon and egotism held his ceremonial feasts, but he was puffed up with pride. Without the Guru’s advice, he had to go to the underworld. *Hari Chand* gave in charity, and earned public praise. But without the Guru, he did not find the limits of the Mysterious Lord. The Lord Himself misleads people for their propensities, and He Himself imparts them understanding.

The evil-minded *Harnaakhash* committed evil deeds. God, the Lord of all, is the destroyer of pride. He bestowed His Mercy, and saved *Prahlaad*. *Raawan* was deluded, foolish and unwise. Sri Lanka was plundered, and he lost his head. He indulged in ego, and lacked the love of the True Guru. The Lord killed the thousand-armed *Arjun*, and the demons *Madhu-keetab* and *Meh-khaasaa*. He seized *Harnaakhash* and tore him apart with his nails. The demons were slain because they did not practice devotional worship. The demons *Jaraa-sandh* and *Kaal-jamun* were destroyed. *Rakat-beej* and *Kaal-naym* were annihilated. Slaying the demons, the Lord saved His Saints.” (AGGS page 224)<sup>483</sup>

<sup>482</sup> ਸਹਸਰ ਦਾਨ ਦੇ ਇੰਦਰ ਰੁਆਇਆ ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੩-੯੫੪)

<sup>483</sup> “ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਗਰਬੁ ਕੀਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਬੇਦ ਕੀ ਬਿਪਤਿ ਪੜੀ ਪਛੁਤਾਨਿਆ.....” (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੪) ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਕਥਿ ਕਥਿ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੨੭) ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਬੇਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਪਰਗਾਸੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹ ਪਸਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੯) ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਵਡਾ ਕਹਾਇ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੯)

The Hindu personalities and gods had to be mentioned to expose the myths attached with them.<sup>484</sup> Such Hindu names mentioned in the Granth do not make the Sikhs become Hindus because similar mention of personalities from other religions has also found place in the Granth.<sup>485</sup> The Gurus mention Hindu or Muslim personalities to comment on their teachings and to rationalize their own approach to religion. The ancient mythical tales are mentioned only for the purposes of illustrating some moral or spiritual truths because people had been fed on these tales for centuries. For example when *Harnaakhash* is mentioned, the lesson drawn is “Pride has a fall” and no respect is shown to *Harnaakhash* or his religious preceptor *Vishnu*. When *Prahlad* and *Dhruv* are mentioned, the aim is to propagate the virtue associated with them.

Recently some Hindu scholars have started quoting Dasam Granth and say that Guru Gobind Singh himself admitted that his father died for the protection of the Hindus. They quote the lines “ਤਿਲਕ ਜੰਜੂ ਰਾਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤਾਕਾ । ਕੀਨੋ ਬਡੋ ਕਲੂ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਕਾ”. It should be remembered in the first instance that the authorship of Dasam Granth has never been conclusively confirmed. Again the sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur was for protecting the *Sants* (be they Hindu, Muslims, Christians or of any other denomination) not for any particular religion. The same Dasam Granth clearly states, “ਸਾਧਨ ਹੇਤ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨ ਕਰੀ । ਸੀਸ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ” (He acted on behalf of the *Sants* and laid down his life without an excuse). The lines quoted above cannot be applied to Hindu *Sadhus* alone. If the people of another religion were in danger the Guru would still have laid down his life. One wonders how these scholars interpret Guru Gobind Singh’s letter written to Emperor Aurangzeb in which he clearly mentions the difference between Hinduism and Sikhism by saying, “*They worship statues but I am an iconoclast.*”<sup>486</sup>

<sup>484</sup> The fact is that here and there the Guru even denies their existence. ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸ਼ੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ (੧੦੩੫)

<sup>485</sup> ਬਾਬਾ ਆਦਮ ਕਉ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਦਿਖਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੬੧)

<sup>486</sup> ਮਨਮ ਕੁਸ਼ਤਮੀ ਕੋਹੀਆਂ ਬੁਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਤ । ਕਿ ਉ ਬੁਤ ਪਰਸਤੰਦ ਮਨ ਬੁਤ ਸ਼ਿਕਸਤ (verse 95) ਕਿ ਈਂ ਬੁਤਪ੍ਰਸਤ ਅਸਤ ਮਨ ਬੁਤ ਸ਼ਿਕਨ (Zafarnama). “ਜਬ ਲਗ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਰਹੇ ਨਿਆਰਾ, ਤਬ ਲਗ ਤੇਜ ਦੀਓ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰਾ॥ ਜਬ ਇਹ ਗਹੇ ਬਿਪਰਨ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ, ਮੈਂ ਨਾ ਕਰੋਂ ਇਨ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤ”॥

## 16.4 Views of Western writers

It is a fact that when a critic looks at another religion through his own established beliefs he is sure to develop a jaundiced outlook instead of grasping the deep spiritual content of the religion under his microscope.<sup>487</sup> Most of the criticism by westerners stems from their study of the Bible. Since Bible is history they treat Sikh religion as history instead of philosophy and place Sikhism in a bracket with Hindu Bhagti movement (Sant tradition) and find nothing new in it. They conveniently ignore that in the field of religions the kernel is 'Spiritual element', which needs to be studied not the apocryphal literature (like *Janam Sakhis*)<sup>488</sup> which accumulates around religions as they grow.

The western writers deliberately, omit a very important fact that the Hindus hated the Muslims and did not use anything touched by a Muslim.<sup>489</sup> On the other hand we find that a large number of Muslims joined the Sikhs. Guru Nanak's lifetime friend Mardana was a Muslim. Later Guru Ram Das appointed Allah Yar Khan as one of the *Masands*.<sup>490</sup>

Guru Har Gobind had a mosque built for Muslims at Har Gobind Pur. According to Macauliffe Emperor Shah Jehan asked Wazir Khan why a Hindu Guru had built a mosque for the Muslims to which Wazir Khan replied, "*Sire, Gurus and Pirs are all men's property. They feel neither love nor hate. He looketh on Hindus and Mohammedans with an equal eye.*" A similar mosque for Muslims was caused to be built by Banda Bahadur at Kahnawan. Guru Hargobind's army, Guru Gobind Singh's army, and that of Banda Singh enlisted so many Muslim soldiers. These facts are sufficient to explode the myth that Sikhism is an offshoot of Hinduism.

---

<sup>487</sup> For example Mahatma Gandhi, influenced deeply as he was by Hinduism, considered intercaste-marriages and inter-dining as "superstition borrowed from the West." Ironically he preached equality among all castes and called the low castes as *Harijans* (God's own) but not for inter-dining and inter-marriage.

<sup>488</sup> "Lives of Baba Nanak called *Janam Sakhis*, are very common but they are so full of fable and invention, displaying such intense ignorance, that they are more calculated to deceive than instruct." (R.N.Cust "*The life of Baba Nanak, the founder of Sikh sect*" (1860 AD))

<sup>489</sup> In the pre-divided India (before 1947) there used to be two pitchers of water for the public at all Railway stations one for the Hindus and the other for the Muslims. If a Muslim touched a Hindu even by accident, the Hindu had to wash in the Ganges to purify himself.

<sup>490</sup> Sayad Buddhu Shah, Said Beg, Maimu Khan, Qazi Pir Muhammad, Nabi Khan, Ghani Khan, Bhikhan Shah and Saen Mian Meer were all associated with the Sikh Gurus. On the other hand Hindus like Lakhpat Rai, Gangu Brahman, Chandu, Sucha Nand and Hindu chieftains opposed the Sikh movement.

Some people have been heard saying that prior to the advent of the Singh Sabha movement, all Sikhs obeyed the Hindu rituals and laws. Sir Lapel Griffin refutes this as follows: *“The Sikhs had abandoned the Hindu faith, and with it the system of law which is the basis of that faith, and which is inseparable from it. For a hundred and fifty years they had been governed as far as chiefships were concerned, by another code altogether, and it was as reasonable for them to refer to Manu and the Shastras as the source of legal authority, as it would have been for Mohammedans, who had embraced Sikhism to appeal to the Shara.”* (The Rajas of the Punjab P. 338).

*“Sikhism is of course Hindu in so far as it is Indian in origin, yet even in the time of the third Guru the Hindus recognised it as quite separate from their own creed and a little later Fani, of Muslim origin, declared it to be separate equally from Islam”.* (Duncan Greenlees. ‘The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib P.171) Elsewhere he writes, *“Sikhism is not a reproduction of earlier religions, but a profound modification of them so profound that it cannot critically be regarded otherwise than as a new revelation altogether.”* (P. CLXXI)

## 16.5 A religion in its own right

Guru Nanak’s religion is a full-fledged independent religion in its own right. It has outlived the *Sant* tradition and is the living faith of the 21st century whereas the *Sant* tradition remains confined to books. No Hindu tradition resulted in the formation of an organisation like the *Khalsa*, which is the culmination of Guru Nanak’s logical thoughts. If anything the Sikh Gurus completely wiped off the influence of the Hindu *Sants*, *Sidhas* and *Yogis* from the public mind in spite of the fact that the former commanded a very great influence on the popular minds of the people of India. Guru Nanak wrote: *“The Hindus are fundamentally in error. Having missed the right path they wander in utter darkness. Narad instructed them to worship idols and statues. This made them spiritually blind and dumb. In foolishness they worship stones. The stone gods themselves sink, how can they help them cross the ocean of life”.* (AGGS page 556)<sup>491</sup>

---

<sup>491</sup> ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੂਲੇ ਭੂਲੇ ਅਖੁਟੀ ਜਾਂਗੀ ॥ ਨਾਰਦਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਿ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਾਂਗੀ ॥ ਅੰਧੇ ਗੁੰਗੇ ਅੰਧ ਅੰਧਾਰੁ ॥ ਪਾਥਰੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਮੁਗਧ ਗਵਾਰੁ ॥  
ਓਹਿ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਡੁਬੇ ਤੁਮ ਕਹਾ ਤਰਣਹਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੬)

A careful study of the essentials of Hinduism and Sikhism will prove that similarities between the two are only skin deep and dissimilarities are more pronounced and numerous. The metaphysics, the social and ritual reformation, and the goals of the two religions are miles apart. Hinduism prohibited travel out of the country but Guru Nanak visited countries outside India preaching his mission and converting Muslims,<sup>492</sup> Christians and Buddhists. On the other hand the Hindus considered the Muslims as *Malechhas* and never re-converted even those Hindus who had been forced to accept Islam. A Hindu Nanak could not have touched, much less eat, Muslim food, and drink the water of Arabia.

We quote hereunder the opinions of some other historians:

1. **Niharanjan Ray** *“To be able to achieve the integration of temporal and spiritual seems to have been the most significant contribution of Guru Nanak to the totality of the Indian way of life of medieval India. Indeed, he seems to have reared up a new image of a socio-religious community given at once to temporal and spiritual pursuits of life as against the earlier view that temporal and the material were set in opposition to the eternal or perennial and the spiritual. Worldly life was considered to be a hindrance, if not positively hostile and antagonistic to a life of the spirit.”*

---

<sup>492</sup> “The Guru after his pleasant visit to Shaikh Braham and his district, where he made several converts proceeded to a country called Bisar Bushahir.”(Sikh Religion Macauliffe P.93) In Kiri Pathan di he converted a number of Muslim Pathans to Sikhism (ibid p.108). For further instances of conversions by Guru Nanak read “Sikhism” by Professor Teja Singh Pages 87- 96

2. **Ms Dorothy Field** in her book “The Religion of the Sikhs” writes, “*The word Hinduism is undoubtedly capable of a wide application, but it is questionable whether it should be held to include the Sikhs in view of the fact that the pure teachings of the Guru assumed a critical attitude towards the three cardinal pillars of Hinduism, the priesthood, the caste system and the Vedas*<sup>493</sup>. A reading of the Granth strongly suggests that Sikhism should be regarded as a new and separate religion, rather than a reformed sect of the Hindus.” She further writes, “*It is essentially a practical religion. If judged from the pragmatical standpoint---a favourable point of view in some quarters--- it would rank almost first in the world. Of no other religion can it be said that it has made a nation in so short a time. Pure Sikhism is far above dependence on Hindu rituals and is capable of a distinct position as a world religion so long as Sikhs maintain their distinctiveness*”.

3. **Mr. M.A. Macauliffe** writes, “*Unlike the scriptures of other creeds, they do not contain love stories or accounts of wars waged for selfish considerations. They contain sublime truths, the study of which cannot but elevate the reader spiritually, morally and socially.....It would be difficult to point to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system.*”

He also writes, “*It (Sikhism) rejected Hindu formularies and adopted an independent ethical system, ritual, and standards which were totally opposed to the theological beliefs of Guru Nanak’s age and country.*” (V.1 p. LIV)<sup>494</sup>

4 **Mohsin Fani** (a contemporary of Guru Har Gobind) in his book *Dabistan-e-Mazahab* writes, “*The Sikhs do not have any faith in the ritual and ceremonies enjoined by the Hindu Shastras, nor do they observe any superstitious restrictions about dining.*”

5. **Sujan Rai of Batala** in his book *Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh (1697 AD)* writes, “*The only way of worship with them (the Sikhs) is that they read the hymns composed by their Gurus and sing them sweetly in accompaniment with musical instruments.*”

<sup>493</sup> ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਇਫਤਰਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਿਲ ਕਾ ਫਿਕਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੨) ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਭਿ ਸਾਸਤ ਇਨ੍ਹ ਪੜਿਆ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪੨) ਬੇਦ ਪੜੇ ਪੜਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਹਾਰੇ ਇਕੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪੨) ਬੇਦ ਪੜੇ ਪੜਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੮)

<sup>494</sup> ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਰਮ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੰਨਣਾ ਮਹਾਂ ਮੂਰਖਤਾ ਹੈ । (ਸਰਵੋਤਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਰਾਮ ਤੀਰਥ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨)



It is a fact that right from the time of Guru Nanak Sikhism developed as a distinctive entity. Guru Nanak openly rejected the Hindu formalism and the Hindu value system when he declined to wear the Hindu sacred thread (*Janeu*) and criticised Hindu rituals.<sup>495</sup> Later Guru Amar Das was exempted by the Mughal Government from paying the pilgrimage tax imposed on the Hindus on the ground that his followers were not Hindus.<sup>496</sup> The Sikh Gurus have made numerous statements claiming that they were neither Hindus nor Muslims.<sup>497</sup> The apparent semblance of commonality between the two religions is no proof that they coincide in all respects. Some of the clear differences can be summarised as follows.

- a. Sikhism rejects the authority of the Vedas & Puranas.<sup>498</sup>
- b. Sacrifices, *Havan*, and *Hom* etc are discarded<sup>499</sup>
- c. Renunciation is replaced by Home life
- d. Caste (Waran Ashram) distinctions are not valued
- e. No language is considered sacred.<sup>500</sup> All languages are equally valued.
- f. Sikhism rejects the *Avtara* theory of reincarnation of God.
- g. Worship of a personal god or statue is considered wastage of time.<sup>501</sup>
- h. Observing fasts and putting frontal marks has no value.

<sup>495</sup> ਪੰਡਿਤ ਵਾਚਹਿ ਪੋਥੀਆ ਨਾ ਬੂਝਹਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਅਨ ਕਉ ਮਤੀ ਦੇ ਚਲਹਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਕਾ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬)

<sup>496</sup> ਹੋਰੁ ਫਕਤੁ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੈ (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮ:੩)। A number of Hindus had complained to Emperor Akbar against Guru Amar Das. “ਪੰਥ ਨਵੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਯੋ । ਭੇਦ ਵਰਣ ਜਾਤੀ ਪਰਹਰਯੋ” (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰਾਸ ੧ ਅ:੪੩) He has started a new religion and is discarding the caste system.

<sup>497</sup> ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੬) । ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਨਿਆਰਾ ਰਹੇ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਚੌਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>498</sup> (1) ਪਤੇ ਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਬੇਦ ਨਹ ਚੁਕੇ ਮਨ ਭੇਦ ਇਕੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਨ ਧੀਰਹਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਘਰ ਕੇ ਪੰਚਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੭) ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਭਿ ਸਾਸਤ ਇਨ੍ਹ ਪੜਿਆ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੮). ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਸਿਰੇ ਤੈ ਅਗਨਤ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮੋਹੁ ਭਯਾ ਮਨ ਮਦ ਕਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੩) ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਤੈ ਗੁਣ ਭੁਲੇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੋਹੁ ਵਧਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੫੨) ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਤੈ ਗੁਣ ਰੋਗੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੫) For further information read “ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਤੇ ਵੇਦ” by Bhai Jodh Singh. “ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨਹੀ” by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha.

<sup>499</sup> ਗੰਗਾਦਿਕ ਤੀਰਥ ਨਹਿ ਜਾਵੈ, ਸੂਤਕ ਪਾਤਕ ਨਹਿ ਮਨਾਵੈ॥ ਜੰਤੂ ਤਿਲਕ ਨ ਛਾਪਾਂ ਧਾਰੈ, ਸ਼ਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਕੀ ਨਹਿ ਪਾਰੈ ॥ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਾਵਤ ਨਾਹੀ ਹੱਡੀ ਪਾਯ ਨ ਗੰਗਾ ਮਾਹੀ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼)

<sup>500</sup> In a letter to Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur (dated 14.11.36) Mahatma Gandhi wrote that the Sikhs should stop using Gurmukhi and start using Dev Nagri “There is no elegance about the Gurmukhi script but I understand that it was specially invented like Sindhi to isolate the Sikhs from the other Hindus.” (See collected works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol.64 page 41)

<sup>501</sup> ਜੋ ਪਾਬਰ ਕਉ ਕਹਤੇ ਦੇਵ ॥ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੇਵ ॥ ਜੋ ਪਾਬਰ ਕੀ ਪਾਈ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਘਾਲ ਅਜਾਈ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੬੦) ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ ਗਲ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਹੁਣੁ ਲੈ ਲਟਕਾਵੈ ॥ ਭਰਮੇ ਭੂਲਾ ਸਾਕਤੁ ਫਿਰਤਾ ॥ ਨੀਰੁ ਬਿਰੋਲੈ ਖਪਿ ਖਪਿ ਮਰਤਾ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਪਾਹੁਣੁ ਕਉ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਕਹਤਾ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਪਾਹੁਣੁ ਲੈ ਉਸ ਕਉ ਡੁਬਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੯)

- i. Pilgrimage, salvation (after death), non-violence, Nature worship (Air, fire etc), Ancestor worship, Brahamcharya, Yoga and other Hindu rituals are rejected in Sikhism.

Sikhism has its own history, its own scripture, its own originators and its own language. All these combine to make it a religion in its own right.

“ਯੂ ਤੋ ਔਰ ਭੀ ਗੁਜਰੇ ਹੈ ਵਲੀ ਅੱਲਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਅੱਛੇ । ਹੈ ਮਗਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਬੁਲੰਦੀ ਕਾ ਮਕਾਂ ਔਰ ।  
ਬੇਸ਼ਕ ਤੂਰ ਪਰ ਕੋਈ, ਕੋਈ ਅਰਸੇ ਬਹੀਂ ਪਰ ਪਹੁੰਚਾ । ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਪਰਵਾਜ਼ਿ ਇਲਾਹੀ ਕਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਂ ਔਰ ।  
ਦੇਤੇ ਹੈਂ ਵੁਹ ਲਾਰੇ ਹੂਰੋਂ ਕੇ ਬਨੀ ਆਦਮ ਕੋ । ਹੈ ਮਗਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਪੁਰਦਰਦ ਦੁਆ ਔਰ ।  
ਕਰਤੇ ਹੈਂ ਵੁਹ ਕੁਫਰ-ਓ-ਦੀਂ ਕੇ ਤਨਾਜ਼ੇ ਸੇ ਜਹਾਂ ਤਾਰੀਕ । ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਨਤੇ ਕਿ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪੁਰਨੂਰ ਜਹਾਂ ਔਰ ।

ਯੂ ਤੋ ਸਭ ਦੇਤੇ ਹੈ ਇਬਾਦਤ ਕੋ ਰੁਤਬਾ-ਏ-ਆਲੂ । ਹੈ ਮਗਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਇਬਾਦਤਿ ਆਲੂ ਕਾ ਬਿਆਂ ਔਰ ।  
ਖੋ ਜਾਤਾ ਹੂੰ ਜਬ ਕਭੀ ਮੈਂ ਬੇਖੁਦੀ ਕੇ ਆਲਮ ਮੇਂ । ਤੋ ਹੋਤਾ ਹੈ ਮੁਝੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਬੜਾਈ ਕਾ ਗੁਮਾਂ ਔਰ” ।

(ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਹਰਭਜਨ ਸਿੰਘ)

## Chapter Seventeen

### They gave their heads

A question is usually asked to explain if Guru Gobind Singh really cut off the heads of the *five Pyaras*. Before we discuss this issue we should note the following important points:

1. That all Sikh Gurus followed the Principles of Gurbani and lived their lives according to the *Hukam* of the Almighty. No Guru contradicted Gurbani through word or deed.
2. The meaning of removing the head does not always mean cutting off the head and replacing it with another one.<sup>502</sup>
3. The Sikhs are required to follow the Guru's advice and not to question him or pry into his secrets.

### 17.1 What does it mean?

Plato wrote, *“The whole life of the philosopher is a preparation for death. For what we do when we remove the soul from pleasure—that is to say, from body, from private property (the body's agent and servant) from public affairs and from every kind of private business.”*

The Gurus have written at various places in the Granth about removing the head and serving the Lord.

---

<sup>502</sup> ਐ ਬੁਲਫਜ਼ੂਲ ਗੋਯਾ ਅਜ ਇਸ਼ਕਿ ਓ ਮਜ਼ਨ ਦਮ । ਕੋ ਪਾ ਨਿਹਦ ਦਰੀਂ ਰਾਹ ਅੰ ਰਾ ਕਿ ਸਰ ਨ ਬਾਸਦ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)= ਐ ਗਲਤੀ ਗੋਯਾ ਐਵੇਂ ਸਿਖ ਬਣਨ ਦੀ ਸ਼ੇਖੀ ਨਾ ਮਾਰ। ਇਸ ਪੰਥ ਉਪਰ ਪੈਰ ਰਖਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਧੜ ਉਤੇ ਸਿਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ । “ਕਮੀਨਾ ਸ਼ਰਤੇ ਵਫਾ ਤਰਕੇ ਸਰ ਬਵਦ ਹਾਫਿਜ਼। ਬਰੇ ਅਗਰ ਜੇ ਤੂੰਈਂ ਕਾਰ ਬਰ ਨਮੇ ਆਇਦ”= ਐ ਹਾਫਿਜ਼ ਛੋਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਛੋਟੀ ਭੇਟਾ ਜੋ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਣੀ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਤੇਰਾ ਸਿਰ ਹੈ । ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਨਾ ਪਵੀਂ। (ਖਵਾਜਾ ਹਾਫਿਜ਼)॥ “ਜੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿਰ ਮੰਗੇ ਬਾਹੂ , ਹਰਗਿਜ਼ ਢਿੱਲ ਨਾ ਕਰੀਏ ਹੂ ॥ (ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਬਾਹੂ)

For example Guru Nanak writes: “Cutting off my head, I give it to Him to sit upon; Thus becoming headless, I serve Him.”<sup>503</sup> Literally speaking if a head is cut off then the cadaver cannot do any service.

Guru Angad Dev says, “Chop off the head that does not bow to the Lord.”<sup>504</sup> One wonders if he himself literally chopped off anybody’s head.

Guru Amar Das says, “It is very difficult to serve the True Guru. offer your head; give up your *ego*”.<sup>505</sup>

Guru Ram Das wrote, “The True Guru has mercifully united me with God. Cutting off my head, and chopping it into pieces, I offer it to Him.”(P.836)<sup>506</sup>

Guru Arjan Dev wrote, “I offer my head to that beloved friend, who brings me news of God.” (P.247)<sup>507</sup>

Baba Farid wrote “Rise up, Farid, and cleanse yourself; chant your morning prayer. A head, which does not bow to the Lord — chop off and remove that head. That head which does not bow to the Lord — what is to be done with that head? Put it in the fireplace, in place of firewood.”<sup>508</sup>

Obviously neither Baba Farid himself nor any Guru literally acted upon this advice and removed his physical head. Therefore it is clear that giving

<sup>503</sup> ਸ੍ਰੀਸੁ ਵਢੇ ਕਰਿ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਵਿਣੁ ਸਿਰ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀਜੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੮) ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ਸਿਰ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨)

<sup>504</sup> ਜੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਸਾਂਈ ਨਾ ਨਿਵੈ ਸੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਡਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯)

<sup>505</sup> “ਸਤਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਗਾਖੜੀ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭) ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਅਰਪੀ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੇਈ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਲਾਗਾ ਪਾਇ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮) ਯੇ ਤੇ ਘਰ ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕਾ, ਖਾਲਾ ਕਾ ਘਰ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀਸ ਉਤਾਰੇ ਭੁਇੰ ਧਰੇ ਤਉ ਪੈਠੇ ਘਰ ਮਾਹਿੰ (ਕਬੀਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਵਲੀ)

<sup>506</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਲੇ ਮੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਆਗੈ ਸਿਰੁ ਕਟਿ ਕਟਿ ਪਈਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩੬)

<sup>507</sup> ਹਉ ਸਿਰੁ ਅਰਪੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਮੀਤ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦੇਇ ਸਦੇਸਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪)

<sup>508</sup> ਉਨੁ ਫਰੀਦਾ ਉਜੁ ਸਾਜਿ ਸੁਬਹ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਿ ॥ ਜੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਸਾਂਈ ਨਾ ਨਿਵੈ ਸੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਕਪਿ ਉਤਾਰਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੮੧) ਜੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਸਾਂਈ ਨਾ ਨਿਵੈ ਸੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਕੀਜੈ ਕਾਇ ॥ ਕੁੰਨੇ ਹੇਠਿ ਜਲਾਈਐ ਬਾਲਣ ਸੰਦੇ ਬਾਇ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੮੧) ਮੈ ਤਉ ਮੋਲਿ ਮਹਗੀ ਲਈ ਜੀਅ ਸਟੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੯੪)

away the head does not mean physically severing the head from the body. Our head is the controlling headquarters of our body where ideas are created and from where actions are directed to be performed. If the head is cut off we physically die.

Bhai Nand Lal wrote: “The journey of love is arduous. The weak cannot trudge on it. However if you give away your head and then walk, the journey becomes easy.”<sup>509</sup> We know that Bhai Nand Lal did give away his head in the spiritual sense but it was not a physical head. In religion this sort of giving is absolutely necessary<sup>510</sup>. The Guru says, “Only those achieve salvation who accept death through the Guru’s *Shabad*.”<sup>511</sup>

Religious leaders of almost all religions have used this phrase.<sup>512</sup> In religious parlance cutting off a head or offering a head means becoming egoless and submitting to the Guru completely. Doing away with past thoughts, behaviour, weaknesses, beliefs, attractions and allegiances and thus reposing complete and unshakable faith in the Guru’s word.<sup>513</sup> In Gurbani such a person is called ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤਾ (Living liberated) or ਜੀਵਨ-ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕ (Living dead).<sup>514</sup> Another similar phrase that has been used by most of the religious preceptors is “selling the head.”

<sup>509</sup> ਮੰਜਲੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਰਾਜ਼ ਅਸਤ ਬਖਾ ਨਤਵਾਂ ਰਫਤ, ਸਰ ਕਰਮ ਸਾਜ਼ ਕਿ ਦਰ ਰਹ ਆਂ ਯਾਰ ਸ਼ਵੀ ( ਭ: ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ੬-੩) “ਸਰ ਅਗਰ ਦਾਰੀ ਬਰੋ ਸਰ ਰਾ ਬਨਹਿ ਬਰ ਪਾਏ ਊ ॥ ਜਾਂ ਅਗਰ ਦਾਰੀ ਨਿਸਾਰਸ਼ ਕੁਨ ਅਗਰ ਦਰਕਾਰ ਹਸਤ॥ (If you have a head then place it at the Guru’s feet. If you desire eternal comforts sacrifice yourself for the Guru .Bhai Nand Lal states that once he asked Guru Gobind Singh to shower his grace on him for offering his (Nand Lal’s ) head. The Guru replied that that sort of business was not acceptable in religion. The head has to be offered selflessly without expecting anything in exchange. ਗੁਫਤਮ ਕਿ ਜਾਂ ਦਹੇਮ ਇਵਜ਼ਿ ਨਿਗਾਹਿ ਤੂ। ਗੁਫਤਾ ਮਿਵਿ ਮਾ ਓ ਤੂ ਸੋਦਾ ਨਮੀ ਸ਼ਵਦ ॥

<sup>510</sup> ਸਦੁ ਜੀਵਨੁ ਭਲੇ ਕਹਾਹੀ ॥ ਮੂਏ ਬਿਨ ਜੀਵਨੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ (ਕਬੀਰ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੫)

<sup>511</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਜੋ ਮਰਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਏ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੨) ਸਬਦ ਮਰੈ ਸੋ ਮਰ ਰਹੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਦੂਜੀ ਵਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮)

<sup>512</sup> The famous English poet John Milton calls it ,”body working up to spirit”.(paradise Lost v) The Holy Bible states, “ It is sown a natural body and is raised a spiritual body”. (I Corinthians xv,44)

<sup>513</sup> ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਉ ਧਨੁ ਰਾਖਉ ਆਗੈ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਸਗਲ ਤਿਆਗੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੦੪) ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਿਹੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਤਜਹੁ ਇਤੁ ਪੰਥਿ ਜੁਲਾਈਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੯੮) ਫਿਦਾਏ ਓ ਸੋ ਵ ਉਜਰੇ ਮਖਾਹ ਐ ਗੋਯਾ । ਕਿ ਦਰ ਤ੍ਰੀਕਤਿ ਮਾ ਜਾਏ ਉਜਰ ਖਾਹੀ ਨੇਸਤ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)= “ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਕੁਰਬਾਨ ਹੋਣ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਜਰ ਨਾ ਲਭ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗੇ ਸੀਸ ਦੇਣ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੀਲ ਹੁਜਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਥਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ” । ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਮਨਮਤ ਤਿਆਗ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਮੱਤ ਦੀ ਅਧੀਨਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਣ ਕਰਨਾ ॥ਸਿਰ ਭੇਟ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਮਤਲਬ ਇਹੋ ਹੈ ।

<sup>514</sup> ਕਬੀਰ ਐਸਾ ਏਕੁ ਆਪੁ ਜੋ ਜੀਵਤ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕੁ ਹੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੪) ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਆਪੇ ਚੀਨੈ ਜੀਵਤਿਆ ਇਵ ਮਰੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੫) ਤਿਆਗਿ ਮਾਨੁ ਝੂਠ ਅਭਿਆਨੁ,ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰਹਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੬)

Obviously when something is sold it ceases to belong to us and becomes the property of the purchaser. Guru Nanak says, “I have sold my body and mind to the Guru, and I have given away my mind along with my head. (P.20)<sup>515</sup>

Guru Amar Das says, “They place mind, body and wealth in offering before the Guru, and sell their heads to Him. (P.1413)<sup>516</sup>

Guru Ram Das says, “The Perfect Guru has revealed the Lord to me. I have sold my head to the Guru. (P.169)<sup>517</sup>

Selling the head or cutting off the head carry the same meaning. They mean complete surrender to the Guru to expect his approval.<sup>518</sup> When this happens the Guru obliterates the past and offers a new direction to the novitiate. It is like washing the vessel thoroughly before using it for carrying fresh milk.<sup>519</sup>

“The Guru’s follower is only the one who cuts off his head and places it before the Guru.” ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸੋਈ ਆਖੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰੇ ਉਤਾਰਿ ( ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੪੭)

*“While we are still alive, this will mean imitation of heavenly life: once we are free from our chains here, our souls will run their race slowly. For those who have been shackled to the flesh make slower progress even when they are released. It is as if they have spent many years in manacles. Once we have arrived at the other place, and only then, we shall live. For this life is truly death and I could, if I would, weep for it.” (CICERO by Anthony Everitt page 247)*

<sup>515</sup> ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਮਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਸਿਰੁ ਨਾਲਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੦)

<sup>516</sup> ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਆਗੈ ਰਾਖਿਆ ਸਿਰੁ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੩)

<sup>517</sup> ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕੀਓ ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਸਿਰੁ ਵੇਚਿਓ ਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਮੋਲੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੬੯) ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੋਲਿ ਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਸਿਰੁ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਮੋਲੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੧) ਉਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਸੀਸੁ ਨ ਬੇਚਿਆ ਓਇ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਅਭਾਗੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੨) ਜਿਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਸੇ ਵੇਚੇ ਸਿਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੬੭) ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਲਜ ਪਾਤਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਸਿਰੁ ਬੇਚਿਓ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੨)

<sup>518</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਸੀਸੁ ਭੇਟ ਦੇਉ ਜੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਾਚੇ ਭਾਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੧੪) ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਸੀਸੁ ਧਰੇਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੬੧)

<sup>519</sup> ਭਾਂਡਾ ਧੋਇ ਬੈਸਿ ਧੂਪੁ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਤਉ ਦੂਧੈ ਕਉ ਜਾਵਹੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੮) ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਉ ਧਨੁ ਰਾਖਉ ਆਗੈ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਸਗਲ ਤਿਆਗੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੦੪)

## 17.2 Their heads were chopped off

The incident that took place on the Baisakhi of March 31, 1699 AD<sup>520</sup> brought together people of various castes, creeds, beliefs and social standing on one platform. These people worshiped myriads of objects. It was not an easy task to challenge their beliefs and bring them round to accept a new belief system, which negated their long-held faith and required them to be fearless. Guru Gobind Singh performed this miracle and brought people round to worship only one God and no other gods, goddesses or powers of nature. At that time it was an impossibility, which the Guru turned into a possibility. He not only obliterated their mutual hatred and prejudices but also made them sip *Amrit* from the same bowl and dine together. Over and above this he removed their fears and cowardice and turned them from cowards into doughty warriors. The Government had banned the beating of a drum and the carrying of a sword but the so-called riff raff of society became so bold after taking baptism (*Amrit*) that they began beating a drum every morning and evening and even carried the swords. The sparrows had really become bold to kill the hawks. The cowards lost their cowardly heads and were given new heads that worshipped one God, hated caste divisions, raised voice against tyranny, refused to accept injustice, helped the needy, and faced the onslaughts of foreign invaders. The kings cowered before their might. It was indeed a miracle the like of which had never before happened in the history of the world. Old heads had been symbolically removed and replaced with new heads.

Some people have invented fantastic stories about the Guru's action. They claim that the Guru killed five goats inside the tent.<sup>521</sup> This is ridiculous. No contemporary or semi-contemporary writer has mentioned anything like this and five goats cannot be expected to sit still in a confined space without bleating.

A teacher teaches the students for a year and then sets an examination paper. He does not disclose his paper before the test.

The Sikh Gurus had been teaching their philosophy of complete surrender

---

<sup>520</sup> These days Baisakhi is celebrated on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April because of changes in the Gregory calendar.

<sup>521</sup> See Indu Bhushan Bannerjee 'Evolution of the Khalsa' Part 2 page 113

for nearly 230 years. The creation of the Khalsa in 1699 AD was the final test to find if their teaching had gone home to their students. The Guru's followers must therefore remember what the Guru says about such tests, *"Do those deeds which the Guru has ordained. Do not pry into the Guru's actions. O Nanak, through the Guru's Teachings, merge in the True Lord. (AGGS P.933)*<sup>522</sup>. He further says, *"Nanak is a sacrifice unto those who behave in the way the True Guru wants them to behave."*(SAGGS page 1415)

---

<sup>522</sup> ਗੁਰਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਾ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵਹੁ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਕਰਣੀ ਕਾਹੇ ਧਾਵਹੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਾਚਿ ਸਮਾਵਹੁ (੯੩੩) ਜੋ ਜੋ ਕਰੈ ਸੋਈ ਮਾਨਿ ਲੇਹੁ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਮਾਨੇ ਰਲਿ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਖੋਹ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੭੦) ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲੈ ਭਾਈਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ ਜੀਉ ਤਿਆਗੋ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤਤੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਜੀਉ ਸਹੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੋ ਕੀਜੈ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੋ ਦੀਜੈ ਐਸਾ ਪਰਮਲੁ ਲਾਈਐ ॥ ਏਵ ਕਹਹਿ ਸੋਹਾਗਣੀ ਭੈਣੇ ਇਨੀ ਬਾਤੀ ਸਹੁ ਪਾਈਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੨)



## Chapter Eighteen

### Questions

#### Q1. God saved Prahlad. Why did He not save Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur?

Answer: The mythical stories in different religions cannot be taken at their face value. We cannot be sure whether the people mentioned in these stories actually existed. Even otherwise the stories, if taken as true, present many quandaries. For example the Hindus consider that Krishna was God, who could miraculously save Daropadi being disrobed but he could neither save his sect (*Yadvas*) from destruction nor save himself from an ordinary hunter who killed him.<sup>523</sup> Brahma is considered the all-powerful Creator of the Universe and produced four Vedas but his Vedas were snatched away from him by the demons and he was helpless against them.<sup>524</sup> Lakshman died of a curse.<sup>525</sup> Raja Dasrath came back from heaven to accept barley flour dumplings from Sita. Savitri contrived to bring back her dead husband Satyavan from the land of the dead.<sup>526</sup> Such mythical stories strain our credulity. Here we find people taking birth from cowdung or through wind,<sup>527</sup> humans turning into stones,<sup>528</sup> Rishis drinking the water of all the world oceans or churn them,<sup>529</sup> moon turning into a cockerel, humans living for millions of years, people having thousands of children,<sup>530</sup> sun being stopped from rising and mountains being carried on the hands of humans. Bawan Avtar was only 52 fingers breadth tall but he expanded himself into a terrific size to cover the whole universe in three steps.

<sup>523</sup> ਕਿਯੋਂ ਕਹੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨਿਧ ਹੈ ॥ ਕਿਹ ਕਾਜ ਤੇ ਬੱਧਕ ਤੀਰ ਲਗਾਇਓ, ਅਉਰ ਕੁਲੀਨ ਉਧਾਰਤ ਜੋ, ਕਿਹ ਤੇ ਅਪਨੋ ਕੁਲ ਨਾਸ ਕਰਾਯੋ ॥ ਆਦਿ ਅਯੋਨਿ ਕਹਾਯ ਰਿਹੋ, ਕਿਮ ਦੇਵਕਿ ਕੇ ਜਨਰੰਤਰ ਆਯੋ ॥ ਤਾਤ ਨ ਮਾਤ ਕਹੋ ਜਿਹ ਕੋ ॥ ਤਿਹ ਕਿਉਂ ਬਸੁਦੇਵਹਿ ਬਾਪ ਕਹਾਯੋ (ਤੇਤੀ ਸਵਯ- ੭੧੪) .” If Krishna was God how could a hunter kill God with an arrow? If he was God then how come he had Devki as his mother? God has no parents. If he could save Daropadi why was his own race completely destroyed?”

<sup>524</sup> ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਗੁਰਬੁ ਕੀਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਵੇਦ ਕੀ ਬਿਪਤ ਪੜੀ ਪਛਤਾਨਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੪) ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਨ ਆਈ ਵੇਦ ਮਥਿ ਅਗਨੀ ਅੰਦਰ ਤਪਤ ਤਪਤਯਾ ॥ (ਵਾਰ ੧/੧੧ (Can God have ego? Were the demons more powerful than Brahma, the creator of the Universe?). Here the Guru refers to the universally accepted god Brahma of the Hindus but it does not mean that such a person really existed. If he did then the Guru would not

Nobody bothers to tell us when and where these mythical personalities lived and whether humans can really perform such actions. Christ is said to have worked miracles all through his life but proved helpless when he was on the cross. A simple miracle at the cross could have made him immortal and spread his religion instantly throughout the world.

Nobody has so far proved that Dhruv and Prahlad really existed and if so when and where but we go on relating their stories to deduce meaningful lessons from them. Some intellectual persons may have invented their stories to inculcate and strengthen religious devotion in their followers. If Dhruva and Prahlad really survived death where are they now? If they eventually died then what was the point of their showing miracles? As far as we can go in recorded history we know that God never saved anyone unless the individual himself acted in his defence. The renowned Muslim *faqir* Sarmad was killed in Delhi, Shibli was stoned to death, Shamas Tabrez was flayed alive, Mansur –al-Hallaj died on stake (922 AD)<sup>531</sup>, and Gursikhs like Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Baba Banda Singh all died although they were spiritually very advanced.

---

write ਕੋਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਜਗੁ ਸਾਜਣ ਲਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੬).” *He has employed millions of Brahmas for creation* “or ਕੇਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਘਾਤਤ ਘੜੀਐ (ਜਪੁਜੀ). In Hindu mythology chronology is conspicuous by its absence. Any god can be mentioned anytime. Ramayan tells us that Brahma used to come to eulogise Ram Chandra who lived in *Tretayuga*. The same Brahma is then mentioned in Bhagwat Puran as having stolen Krishna’s cows. Krishna lived in *Dwaparyuga*. The time gap is thousands of years if not millions. Brahma may still be alive somewhere.

<sup>525</sup> ਸੀਤਾ ਲੈ ਗਇਆ ਦਹਸਿਰੇ ਲਛਮਣੁ ਮੁਢਿ ਸਰਾਪਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨) ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਭੂਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਚੰਦੁ ਸੀਤਾ ਲਛਮਣ ਜੋਗੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨)

<sup>526</sup> Sukracarya brought a group of dead people back to life. Dhanvantri is said to have brought a dead man back to life from the grave after many days.

<sup>527</sup> Hanuman was the son of Air (ਪਵਨ ਪੁਤਰ). He lifted a mountain. Karn was the son of Sun (ਰਵਿ ਸੁਤਨ). Bhim was the son of Vayu (wind) and Arjan was the son of Indra and they were all born without the agency of their father to Kunti through a *Mantra* (incantation) given by Rishi Durvasa to Kunti. Kunti’s husband Pandu was cursed by Rishi Kindam and could not go near his wives. If he did he was cursed to die immediately.

<sup>528</sup> “ਗੋਤਮ ਨਾਰ ਸਰਾਪ ਵਸ ਉਪਲ ਦੇਹ ਧਰਿ ਧੀਰ॥ ਚਰਨ ਕੰਵਲ ਰਜ ਚਾਹਤਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਰਘੁਬੀਰ ॥੨੧੦॥ (ਰਾਮਚਿਤ੍ਰਮਾਨਸ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਦਾਸ) “Due to a curse Gautam’s wife has turned into a stone. O Raghbir she seeks the dust of your lotus feet and your kindness to turn her into human once again.

<sup>529</sup> ਨਿਧਿ ਖੀਰ (Milk ocean) was churned by the gods and demons assisted by Kurma (a tortoise) using a sanke (ਸੋਸ ਨਾਗ) as a rope. Nectar of immortality and a cow etc came out in the process (see the opening pages of Agni Purana)

<sup>530</sup> *Mur* had 7000 sons and was the ruler of Narkasur, which he had controlled by tying a rope round it. Krishna cut the rope with his *chakra* (quote) and killed him. Raja Sagar of Ayodhya had 60,000 sons.

<sup>531</sup> Mansur suffered perhaps the longest torture. He was imprisoned and tortured for years, then fastened to a cross (922AD). He was then scourged with 1000 stripes. At last his hands were cut off, his feet were chopped off, his eyes were gouged out from their sockets, then his tongue was removed. Lastly his head was severed from his body and the corpse was burned and thrown in river

In Christianity Jesus, John Huss (1369-1415AD) and Joan of Arc were burnt alive but God did not come to their rescue. In Judaism Aqiba (130AD) suffered martyrdom for preaching the *Torah*. In 390 BC the Greek philosopher Socrates was poisoned to death. The Parsi prophet Zoroaster laid down his life (583BC). We cannot say that God is capricious in that He saves some children (like Dhruv and Prahalad) or only Hindus and does not save the other devotees. The fact is that even if somebody had really come to save spiritually awake *Sants*, they would have declined to be saved. Such spiritual people die for a cause or a principle, which is dearer to them than their lives.<sup>532</sup>

Nobody has conquered death.<sup>533</sup> This is the law of the Almighty. Brave men die for a noble cause but cowards die without achieving anything. The deaths of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur were for noble causes and have made them immortal. They were given the option to save their lives by abjuring their faith but they declined and died a hero's death. To die in defence of principles is something that started in India only with the advent of the Sikh Gurus. No example of such heroic death can be found in the history of India before the period of the Sikh Gurus. Such death is immortal life. The Gurus were martyrs in the real sense. It is not death that makes one a martyr, it is the principle that does.<sup>534</sup> Just as the rank and file in the army are under oath to obey the orders of their general, the Gurus consider it obligatory to submit to the divine Will of their commander (God) and lay down their lives for upholding His cause.

Again it is worth noting that Daropadi, Prahlad, Dhruv, Christ and many other religious personalities mentioned in the religious texts of the world asked God for help when they were in trouble. The Sikh Gurus did not ask God for help. They knew what they were doing and why. Their sacrifices were not in vain. The sacrifices of no other religious personage brought about similar results as those of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur.

---

Tigris. God did not save him from this ghastly murder but Jalal-ud-din Roomi calls him "The glory of religion."

<sup>532</sup> "Happiness does not spring from physical or mental pleasures, but from development of reason and adjustment of conduct to the principles" ( "How to live 24 hours a day" Mr. Arnold Bennett)

<sup>533</sup> ਜੋ ਆਇਆ ਸੇ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਜਾਸੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੪੭) ਜੋ ਆਇਆ ਸੇ ਚਲਸੀ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ਆਈ ਵਾਰੀਐ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੪) ਜਿਸ ਕੀ ਪੂਜੈ ਅਉਧ ਤਿਸੈ ਕਉਣੁ ਰਾਖਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੩) ਮਰਣਾ ਮੁਲਾ ਮਰਣਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪) ਮਰਣੁ ਲਿਖਾਇ ਆਏ ਨਹੀ ਰਹਣਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੩) "ਜਾਲ ਬਧੇ ਸਬ ਹੀ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੇ ਕਉ ਰਾਮ ਰਸੂਲ ਨ ਬਾਚਨ ਪਾਏ। ਦਾਨਵ ਦੇਵ ਫਨਿੰਦ ਧਰਾਧਰ ਭੂਤ ਭਵਿਖ ਉਪਾਇ ਮਿਟਾਇ। ਅੰਤ ਮਰੈ ਪਛਤਾਇ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀ ਪਰਿ ਜੇ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਕਹਾਏ। (ਸਵੱਯੋ ੨੩)

<sup>534</sup> ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾਂ ਸੁਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮੦)

Their sacrifices immortalized them and resulted in the birth of the mighty Khalsa, which shook the mighty Moghul Empire to its roots.

**Q2. I understand that according to Sikhism human Soul has no sex. Since it is our soul that goes back to God, there cannot be any sin in Sikhism for involving in homosexuality. Am I right? Has God outlined any punishments for gays and lesbians?**

Sikhism does not condone sexual abnormalities like homosexuality and extra-marital relationships. There are a lot of hymns in the holy Granth where too much involvement even in permissible heterosexual sex is described as a great disease and is condemned. A Sikh is expected to observe internal as well as external controls on sexual desire. It should not be curbed but it should also not be made a master either. The Guru advises sublimation (moderation).

You say that 'Soul', which goes back to God, has no sex and therefore homosexuality is no sin. Your statement is disputacious and polemical.<sup>535</sup> We do not know whether soul has a sex or not. What we know for certain is that sexuality does exist in life and there is no life without sex. If all life is part of God, as most religions believe, and God has given us sex, then there must be some purpose in equipping the living beings with sexuality. The Sikh belief is that God is self-born and human beings are a part of Him. In other words God's purpose in creating sexuality in us is His own preservation through guaranteed continuity of human race. Therefore our interest in sexuality should be limited only to self-replication of human progeny or procreation. Beyond this unwritten but universal law of God we should not have any interest in sex. Misuse of sex for pleasure is transgression in religious terms.

According to Sikhism Spiritual reality is more important than sensually perceived empirical reality because the real human being is not the visible physical body but the spirit. Therefore for the humans the spirit must rise higher towards God to become one with Him and in the process lose all interest in sex other than its prescribed purpose. If this does not happen the humans get engrossed in the ephemeral worldly attractions (and sex is one of them) to get astray and waste this precious life. Just as rust grows from iron itself and destroys it, so does perverted sex grow from the uncontrolled desires of the humans and destroys them. The human

---

<sup>535</sup> Many people and some religions (ie Buddhism) do not accept that soul exists.

attractions are called *Ras* (ਰਸ). This word has no equivalent in English so I will call it “illusory flavour” or ‘intense emotion’. Among other illusory flavours the Sikh Gurus have identified five most powerful attractions. They are *Kam* (sex), *Karodh* (anger)<sup>536</sup>, *Lobh* (greed), *Moh* (attachment) and *Ahankar* (pride) in order of their potency. The first one of them is *Kam* (SEX or lust) with which we are concerned here. Guru Tegh Bahadur writes:

“Most humans live in lust; anger and greed, and forget the Lord. They consider the false body as real, which in fact is like a dream at night (GGS P.219)<sup>537</sup>

Just as dreams are not real but appear to be so, our involvement in gratification of bodily ‘illusory flavours’ is not real. It is only a passing phase that distracts us from reality.

Uncontrolled gratification of sexual desires only leads us astray. Bhagat Kabir evocatively depicts the illusory nature of sexual gratification through a natural imagery. He quotes the example of an elephant. An elephant is a very sexy animal. The elephant catchers exploit this weakness. They make a female paper elephant near a big pit. The male elephant rushes to mate with the paper puppet and falls into the pit. He is then domesticated by hitting a big and sharp halter (called ਅੰਕਸ਼) over his head. The poor elephant works for his master as a slave all his life.

*“Lured by the weakness of sexual gratification the elephant is entrapped. O crazy mind know that he suffers the pain of a halter on his head”.*<sup>538</sup>

Elsewhere Kabir writes, “ Little caring for the burning power of a flame, the moth jumps into it, the fish through ignorance is hooked by the bait, whereas we having the discernment do not control our sensual desires complicated as they are with manifold dangers. Alas how inscrutable is the power of delusion (Slok 18)

When we are overpowered by the desire to fulfil sexual propensities, we lose our discriminative faculty, our spiritualism is skewed and lustful motivations over cloud our rational faculties.

<sup>536</sup> ਕਾਮਿ ਕਰੋਧਿ ਜਲੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੬੨) ਕਾਮੁ ਕਰੋਧੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਉ ਗਾਲੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੨)

<sup>537</sup> “ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਮੋਹ ਬਸਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ, ਹਰਿ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਬਿਸਰਾਈ ॥ ਝੂਠਾ ਤਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਜਿਉ ਸੁਪਨਾ ਰੈਨਾਈ” ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੯)

<sup>538</sup> ਕਾਮ ਸੁਆਇ ਗਜ ਬਸਿ ਪਰੇ ਮਨ ਬਉਰਾ ਰੇ ਅੰਕਸੁ ਸਹਿਓ ਸੀਸ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੬)

True love, fidelity, refined behaviour, and moral restraints fly away.<sup>539</sup> The thirst for sex is never quenched. In fact with each gratification it increases manifold and causes further bondage. Too much involvement in sex is an anticlimax of spiritualism.

According to Sikhism homosexuality is an un-natural condemnable act because it does not serve the divine purpose of procreation. Sikhism preaches,<sup>540</sup> *If you remain with one woman you are as good as a celibate*. Therefore any sexual act of a Sikh beyond this ideal is un-Sikh like, undesirable and prohibited by the Guru. Uncontrolled sex, whether homosexual or heterosexual, is forbidden in Sikhism. Extramarital or premarital sex is likewise honey mixed with poison. About all types of sexual activity our Guru says, *“For a momentary sexual pleasure he/she will suffer untold pain for a long time. Although these moments are glorious, they lead to long period of regret”* (I need not mention AIDS).<sup>541</sup>

You also ask me, “Has God outlined any punishments for gays and lesbians?”

As far as I believe, God is not a human being and has no penal code to punish human beings. The punishment for humans is self-inflicted when they transgress the laws of nature. If you eat an item, which is not digested by your body, you suffer. If you steal somebody’s property, your mind is polluted. If you involve in socially forbidden sex, you suffer from AIDS and social ostracism. God’s laws are inscrutable and we cannot always understand what punishment God gives for what offence or sin. In Punjabi there is a phrase, which sums it up succinctly. It reads *“God’s punishment rod makes no noise when it strikes”*.<sup>542</sup> In other words God’s punishment is unpredictable and undecipherable.

<sup>539</sup> Such is the moral depravity of intense sexual gratification that the Hindu God Brahma did not spare even his own daughter Sraswati. His incestuous act is mentioned in the *Purans*. We also find it mentioned in Sikh literature. ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਵਡਾ ਸਦਾਇੰਦਾ ॥ ਦੇਖ ਸਰਸਤੀ ਰੂਪ ਲੁਭਾਣਾ ॥ Similarly we find in the Bible that Lot overpowered by intense sexual desire had sex with his two daughters.

<sup>540</sup> “ਏਕਾ ਨਾਰੀ ਜਤੀ ਹੋਏ”.

<sup>541</sup> ਨਿਮਖ ਕਾਮ ਸੁਆਦ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਕੋਟਿ ਦਿਨਸ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਵਹਿ॥ ਘਰੀ ਮੁਹਤ ਰੰਗ ਮਾਣਹਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਪਛੁਤਾਵਹਿ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੦੩)

<sup>542</sup> “ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਲਾਠੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ”

The question that our Guru raised was “*How to be the ideal human being?*”<sup>543</sup> He answered it himself by saying, “*To live within the universal law*”<sup>544</sup>. At another place he says, “*Only those can claim to be humans who spend their lives within self-imposed restrictions.*”<sup>545</sup> Too much sex and for that matter homosexuality is an infringement of the divine principle (of procreation) and is practised only to derive pleasure, which is ephemeral. It is a worldly perversity, which soon tends to go down to animal level and in many cases ends up in bestial behaviour.

### **Q3. Are the Sikhs restricted from studying other religions?**

Answer:- Man has always been religious from the day he inhabited this planet. History of mankind is closely associated with history of religion. The social, economic, artistic, and political aspects of human life have been deeply affected by religion since time immemorial. Home industries, trade, and our fairs have had a religious origin or impact. In many cases even wars resulted from religion which gave rise to politics. Religious beliefs have a great lot to do with our work and trade. For example the Jains did not like farming because it involved killing insects. As a result Jains are mostly involved in trade all over the world. The division of the Hindu society into four classes resulted in different people doing different jobs and achieving expertise in different fields. Religion also directed the human effort into artistic and literary fields. Most of our old world literature is religious. Similarly most of the old drawings, paintings, and buildings depict religious motifs.

Politics is also related to religion. Kings and rulers always tried to preach their religions far and wide which led to wars and defence. The thinking of the priests moulded the policies of the kings. We know that Buddhism affected the politics of many countries in Asia.

Religions are different ways to the same reality. Just as not all doctors administer the same medicine to all patients, religions offer different sets of philosophy to different people. Understanding religions adds to our knowledge. For example we can understand Japanese better if we understand their religion and beliefs. In our present world we live cheek

---

<sup>543</sup> “ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹਈਐ” (ਜਪੁਜੀ)

<sup>544</sup> “ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ” (ਜਪੁਜੀ)

<sup>545</sup> , “ਬੰਦੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਕਰਾਏ ਤਾ ਕਉ ਕਹੀਐ ਬੰਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੯) ਬੰਦੇ ਸੇ ਜਿ ਪਵਹਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਬੰਦੀ ਵੇਖਣ ਕਉ ਦੀਦਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੫)

by jowl with people professing various other religions and the only way to understand them and reduce the prejudice is to study their religious backgrounds that shaped their thinking and behaviour. Such an attitude brings human beings closer to each other and leads to peaceful co-existence, which is one of the aims of Sikhism. The alternative to this is internecine conflict, which can destroy the human society.

Guru Nanak studied Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Hinduism and almost all Sikh Gurus have quoted from these sources. No Guru has barred the Sikhs from studying other religions.<sup>546</sup>

#### **Q4. Amrit means “no death” and yet *Amrit dharis* die. Why?**

Answer: Before we discuss this issue we must know what death is. Physical death is cessation of activity. When the cells of our body disintegrate we die. This can happen due to disease, old age, poison, loss of blood or through any other such cause.<sup>547</sup> Death is certain and cannot be conquered. No religious leader the world over has so far lived beyond the usual span of human existence. To say that *Amrit* or *Abe-Hyat* conquers death is a myth and so far no remedy for physical death has been discovered<sup>548</sup>. What would this world be like if nobody died?

In religious idiom the term death does not mean physical death. For example Guru Nanak says, “*When I say my prayers I live, when I forget the Lord, I die*”<sup>549</sup> All religious leaders without an exception talk of dying and then becoming alive which does not mean dying a physical death and reappearing in a new physical body. It means dying to the attractions of the world and becoming alive in spirit. This is absolutely necessary in all religions.

Once a person dies this kind of death he attains ever-lasting life in the Almighty.<sup>550</sup>

<sup>546</sup> ਪ੍ਰਸਾ ਸਗਲ ਚਹੁ ਬਰਨਨ ਸਹਿਤ, ਇਨ ਤੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਨਿਆਰੀ ਰਹਿਤ ॥ ਸਭ ਕੈ ਸੰਗ ਰਖੇ ਵਿਵਹਾਰਾ, ਨਿਹਚਾ ਨੇਮ ਇਨਹੂੰ ਤੇ ਨਿਯਾਰਾ ॥ (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰੁਤ ੩ ਅਧਿਆਇ ੫੦ ਅੰਕ ੪੮)

<sup>547</sup> ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਕਿਆ ਹੈ ? ਅਨਾਸਰ ਕਾ ਜ਼ਹੂਰਿ ਤਰਤੀਬ । ਮੌਤ ਕਿਆ ਹੈ ? ਇਨਹੀਂ ਅਜਜ਼ਾ ਕਾ ਪਰੋਸ਼ਾਂ ਹੋਨਾ । (ਗਾਲਿਬ)

<sup>548</sup> ਜੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਸੋ ਕਾਲਿ ਸੰਘਾਰਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੭) ਜੰਮਣ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੋ ਵਰਤੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੪) ਜੰਮਣ ਮਰਣਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਤਿਨਿ ਕਰਤੈ ਕੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੦) ਜੰਮਣ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨)

<sup>549</sup> ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੪੯) ਤੂੰ ਵਿਸਰਹਿ ਤਦਿ ਹੀ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੯), ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸੋ ਮੂਏ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਹੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੬੮)

<sup>550</sup> ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰਹੁ ਮਰਹੁ ਫੁਨਿ ਜੀਵਹੁ ਪੁਨਰਪਿ ਜਨਮ ਨ ਹੋਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੦੪) ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰੈ ਮਰੈ ਫੁਨਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਤਾ ਮੋਖੰਤਰੁ ਪਾਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੦) ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰਹਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੬)



According to the Guru such death comes only to those rare people who are absorbed in God, through the Guru's 'Word' (Shabad)<sup>551</sup>

Spiritual knowledge available to us in Gurbani is *Amrit* and has the power to bring a worldly dead person to eternal spiritual life.<sup>552</sup> The *Amrit Sanchar* organised by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 AD was an attempt to educe pledge from the novitiates to follow Gurbani. To get baptised and not to read, understand, and act upon Gurbani does not work miracles.<sup>553</sup> Such a person is still dead after having been baptised. For the Sikhs *Amrit* is their Guru's 'Word'.

### Q5. Does Sikhism approve spiritual healing?

Many people make claims that repeating certain hymns of Gurbani cured them from certain diseases. Some even suggest that certain *Shabads*, if repeated a certain number of times, cure certain diseases or fulfil desires. Some modern day *Sants* have even started hanging amulets containing Gurbani round people's necks and claim that they have magical powers. However no Guru has mentioned any such thing in the Holy Scriptures. In fact the Gurus have forbidden such actions.<sup>554</sup>

It should be noted that most of our diseases are either psychological or the result of some irregularities committed by ourselves.<sup>555</sup> No disease is sent by God to chastise us. Here are some causes of the diseases:

<sup>551</sup> ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਮਾਇ ॥ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਏ ਜਿ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੬) ਸਬਦੁ ਮਰੈ ਸੋ ਮਰਿ ਰਹੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਦੂਜੀ ਵਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੮)

<sup>552</sup> ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਉ ਸਦਾ ਧਿਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੧੭) ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੨) ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਤ ਪੀਤੋ ਤਿਖ ਜਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੪) ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੪)

<sup>553</sup> ਮਨੁ ਬੋਧੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਪਾਸਿ ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਰਾਸਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੬) ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦ ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩)

<sup>554</sup> ਅਉਖਧ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਤੰਤ ਸਭ ਛਾਹੁ॥ ਕਰਣੈਹਾਰੁ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਮਹਿ ਧਾਰ (੧੯੬-੧) (Reject recitation of *mantras* and observance of rituals. Only let the Creator occupy the seat in your heart.)

<sup>555</sup> Gurbani has identified three main types 1. Inherited diseases (ਆਧਿ) 2. Diseases of the body (ਬਿਆਧਿ) and 3. Diseases of the mind (ਉਪਾਧਿ). The first two need physical treatment and the last one is psychological. Without love of God humans are ਪ੍ਰੇਤ ਪਿੰਜਰ (abode of devil)! ਪ੍ਰੇਤ ਪਿੰਜਰ ਮਹਿ ਦੂਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ਨਰਕਿ ਪਚਹਿ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਧੇਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨੯)

1. Too much enjoyment through our five sense organs.
2. *Haumain*. Self-conceit. Ego
3. Immoral actions and their reactions.
4. Disturbing the harmony of the laws of nature.
5. Weakness of mind

Gurbani instructs us about food, dress, cleanliness, and above all about psychological self-examination (known as introspection)<sup>556</sup>. If we properly follow the Guru's directions we can be immune to all diseases and also cure most of those that have afflicted us already.<sup>557</sup> Sincere prayer performed with deep devotion by a patient himself/herself works wonders. It aids determination, boosts will power and has a lot of salutary effect on the patient. Congregational prayers performed sincerely from the heart may offer some emotional relief to the patient although no empirical data is available. Magic potions, incantations, and soothsaying of outsiders have absolutely no effect on the sufferer.<sup>558</sup>

Gurbani lends peace to mind, helps forget problems, develops fortitude, suggests ways of solving life problems and attaches us to truth. If we think ill of others or do some harm to somebody, it affects us psychologically and causes disease.<sup>559</sup> Negative thinking and worries too cause many diseases. That is why the Guru instructs us to be always on the ascendant. (ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ) and never to think ill of others.<sup>560</sup> If we overeat or do not care about hygiene, we fall ill.<sup>561</sup>

<sup>556</sup> ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਖੋਜੈ ਹੋਰ ਸਭ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੪) । ਬੰਦੇ ਖੋਜੁ ਦਿਲ ਹਰ ਰੋਜ ਨਾ ਫਿਰੁ ਪਰੇਸਾਨੀ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੭)

<sup>557</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਿਉ ਰੰਗ ਲਾਇ, ਗੁਰ ਦਿਆਲੁ ਹੋਇ ਦੁਖੁ ਜਾਇ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੭) ਸਰਬ ਰੋਗ ਕਾ ਅਉਖਦੁ ਨਾਮੁ, ਕਲਿਆਣ ਰੂਪ ਮੇਲ ਗੁਣਿ ਗਾਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੪) “ਰੋਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵਤ ਜਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸੁ ਲੜਿ ਲਾਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੧) ਦਾਰੂਏ ਹਰ ਦਰਦ ਰਾ ਯਾਦੇ ਖੁਦਾਸਤ (ਹਰ ਰੋਗ ਦਾ ਦਾਰੂ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਹੈ)– (ਭ.ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>558</sup> Templeton and Harvard scientists conducted research to find if prayers of relatives have any effect on the recovery of patients. This was the sixth such experiment. The experiments produced no empirical evidence to show the effect of prayers on the health of a patient. Prayers help only those who themselves sincerely pray from the heart. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of” but such prayers must be performed by the patient himself / herself. Congregational prayer can lend only sympathy. Sympathy does lend consolation to the sufferer but does not help in curing the disease.

<sup>559</sup> ਹਉ ਮਾਰਉ ਹਉ ਬੰਧਉ ਛੋਡਉ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਏਵ ਬਬਾੜੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੦), ਹਮਰੀ ਭੂਮਿ ਕਉਣੁ ਘਾਲੈ ਪੈਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੮) ਜਬ ਇਨਿ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਅਪਨੀ ਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਤਬ ਇਸ ਕਉ ਹੈ ਮੁਸਕਲੁ ਭਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੩੫), ਮਾਥੇ ਪੀਰ ਸਰੀਰਿ ਜਲਨਿ ਹੈ ਕਰਕ ਕਰੇਜੇ ਮਾਹੀ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੯)

<sup>560</sup> ਪਰ ਕਾ ਬੁਰਾ ਨ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਚੀਤ ॥ ਤੁਮ ਕਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਭਾਈ ਮੀਤ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੬) ਮੰਦਾ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਪਚਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਿਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਦੀਨਾ ਧਾਕੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨੫)

<sup>561</sup> ਜੇਤੇ ਰਸ ਸਰੀਰ ਕੇ ਤੇਤੇ ਲਗਹਿ ਦੁਖ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੭)

Sometimes physical diseases are also caused by some mental or psychological factors. The Gurus do not offer any chemicals or incantations to cure diseases but attack such diseases through the mind. In this connection Bhai Nand Lal writes, “*The perfect Guru treats the mind and thus psychologically fulfils the desires by removing the causes of the diseases*”.<sup>562</sup> Gurbani cures diseases when it is devotedly read, understood and followed in letter and spirit.<sup>563</sup> Mere repetition like a *mantra* has no effect. Most people are not only diseased but also spiritually dead. What they need is not pharmaceutical treatment but psychological help, which the Guru provides through Gurbani. “*The Guru has poured the Ambrosial Nectar of the Lord’s Name into my mouth, O my soul. Now my dead soul has come back to life.*”<sup>564</sup>

Some physical diseases are caused by some factors about which we humans have so far not been able to know and guard against. Guru Angad Dev suffered from a cyst on his foot. Guru Hargobind suffered from small pox in his childhood and Guru Harkrishan died from the same disease. In their days nothing much was known about these diseases and their causes. We should remember that Guru Har Rai ran a dispensary and doled out free medicines.<sup>565</sup> If he could cure diseases through repeating certain *Shabads* (or through amulets), he would not spend money on medicines.

The Guru’s panacea for all diseases is *Gurbani*. The following prescription may help many people to avoid diseases or even cure them.

1. ਓਨੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਤੋੜੇ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਅੰਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੋੜਾ ਖਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੭) Eat sparingly.
2. ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਉ ਗਾਲੈ ॥ ਜਿਉ ਕੰਚਨ ਸੋਹਾਗਾ ਢਾਲੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩੨)  
Anger and Over indulgence in sex spoil health.
3. ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਰਘ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੬)  
Ego is a big disease.
4. ਸੋ ਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਨ ਪਾਪੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯੮)  
A sinless body is truly healthy.
5. ਮੰਦਾ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਆਖੀਐ ਪਤਿ ਅਖਰੁ ਏਹੋ ਬੁਝੀਐ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

<sup>562</sup> “ਮੁਰਸ਼ਦੇ ਕਾਮਲ ਇਲਾਜੇ ਦਿਲ ਕੁਨਦ ॥ ਈ ਮੁਰਾਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਬਦਿਲ ਹਾਸਲ ਕੁਨਦ” (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)

<sup>563</sup> ਅਉਖਧੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਵਿਆਪੈ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਹਿਤੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਦੂਖੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੧੪) ਈਧਣੁ ਕੀਤੋਮੁ ਘਣਾ ਭੋਰੀ ਦਿਤੀਮੁ ਭਾਹਿ ॥ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੰਦੜੇ ਸਚੁ ਸਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਭੇ ਡੁਖੜੇ ਉਲਾਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੦੬), ਅਉਖਧੁ ਖਾਇਓ ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੭੮)

<sup>564</sup> ਗੁਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਚੋਇਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁਤੀਏ ਫਿਰਿ ਮਰਦਾ ਬਹੁਤਿ ਜੀਵਾਇਆ ਰਾਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੯)

<sup>565</sup> It is said that even Emperor Shah Jahan benefitted from the Guru’s dispensary.

- The aim of education is to understand that no one is inferior.
- 6 ਨਾਨਕ ਫਿਕੈ ਬੋਲਿਐ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਫਿਕਾ ਹੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)
- Fowl talk sickens mind and body.
- 7 ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੭)
- Fear not and frighten no one.
- 8 ਜੇ ਜੈਸੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਸੇ ਤੈਸੇ ਫਲੁ ਖਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੯)
- Your company influences your health.

“The Guru’s true follower can save himself from discomforts.”<sup>566</sup>  
(AGGS P.864)

#### **Q6. How does Sikhism react towards drinking, smoking and using drugs?**

People have been using intoxicating drugs since time immemorial. It has no direct connection with God or spiritualism. In olden times there was no research on this topic to find out whether their use is good for health or harmful. Slowly and steadily the research developed and the facts about intoxication began to come to light.

#### **Drinking in the East:**

The first reference to drinking in India is found in the Vedas. The Rig Vedic *Rishis* (Religious mendicants) are said to have used *Som Ras*, which was a kind of intoxicating drug. Another less respectable kind of intoxication was *Sura* consumed by poor people. The elite of the times did not find liquors good for health. In Rig Veda therefore, drinking is condemned as harmful (Rig Veda Viii 2-12 and Vii 86-6) In the post Vedic period drinking became very common. Wine was drunk openly in *Aspamedha* rituals and even women consumed it (See ‘The East and the West’ by Vivekananda).<sup>567</sup> So much so that even the very religious people began to drink. For example in *Mahabharat* (LVIII-5) we read that Krishna and Arjuna drank *Madhvasava* (a kind of wine).

The *Yadva* tribe of Lord Krishna became extinct because of drunkenness, which infested the whole tribe. In many areas the Brahmans and the priests preached its use and even associated it with spirituality. *Hashish*

<sup>566</sup> ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਦੁਖ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੬੪)

<sup>567</sup> The great lawgiver Manu wrote, “Consuming alcohol is one of the causes of the ruin of women” (Manu IX 80 and IX- 235).

began to be used on the pretext that Lord Shiva used it. It is still offered to Shiva and is commonly smoked at religious rituals in many Hindu temples. In the South of India people have been using Toddy (fermented sap of coconut) as wine.

Drinking is strictly forbidden in Islam but the Mughal rulers of India were greatly fond of drinking. Babar used to get drunk and fully inebriated used to say, “Babar enjoy this life, you will not get another.”<sup>568</sup> Emperor Jehangir was the worst binge- drinker. In his autobiography, *Tuzk-e-Jehangiri*, he himself writes, “I have sold the kingdom of India to Noor Jehan for one cup of liquor and a portion of meat”.<sup>569</sup> He also writes, “ I used to drink nearly 20 pegs of the top intoxicating liquor. Soon my body developed reaction to it and I could not even hold the cup. Others used to put the cup to my lips.”

### **Drinking in the West**

Drinking in the West has been common since time immemorial. The Romans were very fond of drinking. In some parts of the Bible (especially the Old Testament) we find drinking recommended for use by religious men. “God gave it to gladden the heart of man” (Psalm 104-115). “Wine cheers Gods and men.” (Judges 9-13). “Honour thy Lord and thy vats will be bursting with wine” (Deut 7-13). Jesus is said to have changed water into wine. Later, Paul advised Timothy to “Use a little of wine to keep the stomach in order”(Timothy 5-23). Wine is still consumed in the Churches during Lord’s Supper.

However, there are references in the Bible itself where drinking is condemned. “The drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty” (proverbs 21). In Ephesians (5-18) St. Paul says, “Do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery”. In Ezekiel (44-21) priests are advised not to enter the inner court of the church after consuming wine.”

---

<sup>568</sup> ਬਾਬਰ ਬਾ ਐਸ਼ ਕੋਸ਼ ਕਿ ਆਲਮ ਦੋਬਾਰਾ ਨੇਸਤ (ਤੁਜ਼ਕ-ਏ-ਬਾਬਰੀ)

<sup>569</sup> ਮਾ ਹਮਾ ਦਯਾਰ-ਏ-ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਬਦਸਤ ਨੂਰਜਹਾਂ ਬਾ ਯਕ ਪਯਾਲਾ-ਏ-ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਬਾ ਯਕ ਸੀਖਿ ਕਬਾਬ ਫ਼ੋਖਤਾਏਮ”. Read Page 42 of Tuzk-e-Jehangiri Maulvi Ahmad Ali published by Sange meel publications Lahore 1977.

### Sikh view:

As discussed above the two ancient religions of the world (Hinduism and Christianity) do not provide any clear-cut guideline on drinking.

Sikhism strictly forbids drinking. We find references to drinking, which are consistent. Nowhere does the Guru support drinking or permits any laxity in its use.

Guru Nanak addressed Bharthari thus *“Make spiritual wisdom your molasses, and meditation your scented flowers; let good deeds be the herbs. Let devotional faith be the distilling fire, and your love the ceramic cup. Thus the sweet nectar of life is distilled. O Baba, the mind is intoxicated with the Naam, drinking in its Nectar. It remains absorbed in the Lord’s Love. Night and day, remaining attached to the Love of the Lord, the celestial music of the Shabad resounds.”* (AGGS page 360)<sup>570</sup>.

*“By drinking O Nanak, one takes on countless vices and corruption. So make spiritual wisdom your molasses, and the Praise of God your bread; let the Fear of God be the dish of meat. O Nanak, this is the true food; let the True Name be your only Support.”* (AGGS page 553-554)<sup>571</sup>

Sikh history tells us that Guru Angad Dev refused to meet Maluka unless he agreed to give up drinking.

In modern days the Sikhs have come to be known as the people who consume alcohol more than any other group. No wonder the chronic asthma and liver complaints are on the increase among the Sikhs. In India one of the main causes of divorce is binge drinking. Traffic accidents increase year after year due to drinking and so do the drug and drink related disabilities. Murders and suicides are mostly the result of drinking.

The Sikhs in Britain are being influenced by the Western culture and have joined the swelling ranks of drinkers ignoring the instructions of their

---

<sup>570</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਕਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਧਾਵੈ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣੀ ਕਸੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ ਭਾਠੀ ਭਵਨੁ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕਾ ਪੋਚਾ ਇਤੁ ਰਸਿ ਅਮਿਉ ਚੁਆਈਐ॥ ਬਾਬਾ ਮਨੁ ਮਤਵਾਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਰਸੁ ਪੀਵੈ ਸਹਜ ਰੰਗ ਰਚਿ ਰਹਿਆ ॥ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਬਨੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗਹਿਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੬੦)

<sup>571</sup> ਇਤੁ ਮਦਿ ਪੀਤੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਖਟੀਅਹਿ ਬਿਕਾਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਮੰਡੇ ਭਉ ਮਾਸੁ ਆਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਆਧਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੬) Guru Nanak is said to have addressed Babar by saying, “ਲੁੰਢਾਏ ਹੋ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਖਮ ਖਮ ਸੁਭਾਏ ਇਰਫਾ ਕੇ, ਕਹਾਂ ਵਹ ਤਾਲਬਿ ਅਫਸੁਰਦਾ-ਏ-ਅੰਗੂਰ ਹੋਤੇ ਹੈ”। Those who drink the Amrit of the word, care little for dirty grape water.”

Gurus. Ironically some well-educated Sikhs organise drink and dinner parties on the occasion of Baisakhi when the use of alcohol was specifically forbidden to the Sikhs. They proudly publish their pictures of such parties in the world press. Many ultra modern Diaspora Sikhs have even started taking Guru Granth Sahib to the public bars at weddings. Little wonder they start offering drinks to Guru Granth Sahib and invent a libation ceremony.

Drinking has now become a fashion in the West in spite of the research proving it to be the cause of impairing a person's efficiency. It dulls the brain and what is called relaxation is nothing but loss of self-control. A drunkard would do certain immoral acts that an ordinary sober man abhors. Guru Nanak mentioned this fact more than 500 years ago<sup>572</sup>

There are some who would accept that Guru Granth Sahib forbids drinking but argue that there is no mention in it of smoking and other hard drugs used today. Guru Granth Sahib preaches the attainment of Sehaj (moderation) and has outlined general guidelines. It forbids all intoxication of whatever kind.<sup>573</sup> The modern drugs like LSD etc were not yet invented in the Guru period otherwise they would have found a mention in Gurbani. Smoking started only when Columbus discovered Tobacco plant in 1493 AD. Sir John Hawkins brought Tobacco plant to England in 1565.<sup>574</sup> Later Sir Thomas Row took it from England to India and offered it to King Jehangir in 1615 AD but by then the volume of Guru Granth Sahib had been completed (1604 AD). There are references in Sikh history where the later Gurus prohibited its use.<sup>575</sup> Guru Gobind Singh prohibited all intoxication. His injunctions apply to all intoxicants even those not yet invented.

<sup>572</sup> ਜਿਤੁ ਪੀਤੈ ਮਤਿ ਦੂਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਬਰਲੁ ਪਵੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਇ ॥ ਆਪਣਾ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਈ ਖਸਮਹੁ ਧਕੇ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਪੀਤੈ ਖਸਮੁ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਦਰਗਹ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥ ਝੂਠਾ ਮਦੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਪੀਚਈ ਜੇ ਕਾ ਪਾਰਿ ਵਸਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਸਚੁ ਮਦੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਆਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੫੪)।

<sup>573</sup> ਬਾਬਾ ਮਨੁ ਮਤਵਾਰੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਸਿ ਪੀਵੈ ਸਹਜ ਰੰਗ ਰਚ ਰਹਿਆ । ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਬਨੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਗਹਿਆ ॥ ਪੂਰਾ ਸਾਚ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਸਹਜੇ ਤਿਸਿਹ ਪੀਆਏ ਜਾ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ । ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਕਾ ਵਾਪਾਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਕਿਆ ਮਦਿ ਛੁਛੇ ਭਾਉ ਕਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੬੦) In the time of Guru Ram Das betel nuts , betel leaf and lipstick were used by women. The Guru condemned their use. “ਪਾਨ ਸੁਪਾਰੀ ਖਾਤੀਆ ਮੁਖਿ ਬੀੜੀਆ ਲਾਈਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੬)

<sup>574</sup> It was first smoked in Pied Bull Inn at islington but soon became so popular that Sir Walter Raleigh even took it to the scaffold. In 1584 King James I banned its use. He wrote, “A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof , nearly resembling the horrible stygian smoke of pit that is bottomless.”

<sup>575</sup> ਕੁਠਾ ਹੁਕਾ ਚਰਸ ਤਬਾਕੂ, ਗਾਂਜਾ ਟੋਪੀ ਤਾੜੀ ਖਾਕੂ ॥ ਇਨਕੀ ਓਰ ਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਦੇਖੇ ਰਹਿਤਵੰਤ ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਬਿਸੇਖੇ (ਰਹਿਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ) ਜਗਤ ਜੂਠ ਤੇ ਰਹੀਏ ਦੂਰ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਸੂਭਾ ਰੂਰ (ਰਹਿਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਯਾ ਸਿੰਘ) ਸੂਹਾ ਪਹਿਰ ਲਏ ਨਸਵਾਰ, ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ ਖੁਆਰ (ਤਨਖਾਹ ਨਾਮਾ ੮) ਗੰਦਾ ਧੂਮ ਬੇਸ ਤੇ ਤਿਆਗਹੁ ॥ ਅਤਿ ਗਿਲਾਨਿ ਇਸ ਤੇ ਧਰ ਭਾਗਹੁ ॥ (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰਾਜ ੧੧ ਅਧਿਆਏ ੪੪) ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸਿਖ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਨਾ ਪੀਵੈ.....ਬਸ ਲਗਦੇ ਬਿਖਿਆ (ਤਮਾਕੂ ) ਕਾ ਵਣਜ ਭੀ ਨਾ

## Q7. How many Gurus do the Sikhs believe in?

Over and above the ten Sikh Gurus some people identify other Sikh Gurus as well. Some non-Sikhs, out to downgrade Sikhism, also intentionally augment such attempts. Some *sants* have also started calling themselves Gurus. In the Holy Granth too we have Shabad Guru, Pawan Guru, Granth Guru, and Sikh Guru<sup>576</sup>. In addition the phrase Guru Khalsa is also commonly used. A Muslim friend has raised this question. “How many Gurus do the Sikhs believe in?”

### Eternal Guru (Shabad)

As discussed earlier there is only one Guru, the creator of the Universe.<sup>577</sup> When the spirit of the Lord (His Word or Shabad) dawns upon somebody and the later attains divine enlightenment he becomes a part of God and assumes the title of a Guru.<sup>578</sup> A Guru is a perfect human being<sup>579</sup> who enshrines the Lord's Word. It is the Lord's Word (Shabad), which remains the real Guru and not the material body of the Guru's person.<sup>580</sup> The ten Gurus of the Sikhs were one in spirit (Word). They were like the ten lamps ignited by a single flame and thus preaching one and the same philosophy.<sup>581</sup>

### Granth Guru

---

ਕਰੇ (ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿਬਰ), “ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਮੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਿਸਨੂੰ ਤੰਬਾਕੂ ਪੀਵਣਾ ਤੇ ਨਸਵਾਰ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਵਣੀ ਅਜੇਹੀ ਹੈ ਜੈਸੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਸ ਖਾਇਆ” (ਸਾਖੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ੬੦), ਹੁਕਾ ਨ ਪੀਵੈ ਦਾੜ੍ਹੀ ਨਾ ਮੁੰਡਾਵੇ ਸੋ ਤੋ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ (ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪ:੧੦ ਭਾਈ ਕੁਇਰ ਸਿੰਘ Also see 328 where Koer Singh writes,” ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਤੰਬਾਕੂ ਜੂਆ ਚੋਰੀ ਯਾਰੀ ਸੋ ਹੋਤ ਨ ਕਰੇ)

<sup>576</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਏਕੋ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਲਾਏ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੪੪) A Guru is first Sikh then Guru. The difference disappears when both reach the same level of spirituality. We have exmples of Guru Angad Dev and Guru Amar Das who were *Sikh Gurus*. ਗੁਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਦੁਤੀਅ ਗਏ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਊ (ਪੰਨਾ ਪੜ੫). The Guru has implanted the Word of His Shabad within me; I have attained the supreme status.

<sup>577</sup> ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਆਪਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੭)

<sup>578</sup> ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋਧੇ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬੇਦ, ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਹੀਂ ਭੇਦ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੪੩) ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਅਨੂਪ, ਸਫਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਰੂਪੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੨) ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਭਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ.੪੪੨) ਗੁਰ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ ਜੋ ਤਿਸ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਪਰਵਾਣ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੬੪)

<sup>579</sup> A perfect man is uniformly selfless, neither double-minded nor half-minded, intelligent, profoundly simple, devoid of covetousness, and also of lust for power and fame.” (The perennial philosophy Page55)

<sup>580</sup> ਸਬਦਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਭਵਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਇਤ ਉਤ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੪) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦੧) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੫) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩) ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਕਾਸਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਰਸਨ ਬਸਾਯਉ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੭) “ਜੋ ਸਿਖ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਸਬਦ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥ ਸਬਦ ਕਮਾਇ ਪਰਮ ਪਦ ਪਾਵੈ (ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰਾਸੀ ੧੦ ਅਧਿਆਏ ੨੧)

<sup>581</sup> ਜੋਤਿ ਓਹਾ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਇ ਸਹਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰਿ ਪਲਟੀਐ



When a Guru spiritually installs his *shabad* in a Granth, the Granth becomes the Guru (guide) for posterity. In Sikhism the ten Sikh Gurus preached a set philosophy and were living Gurus. Later the last living Guru passed on the Guruship to the Holy Granth. The Guru still remains the ‘Word’ (*Shabad*) not the paper or the ink used in the Granth.

There is only one Guru and it is the “Word”.<sup>582</sup> Since the ‘Word’ is in the Granth Sahib, therefore the Sikhs call Granth Sahib as the spiritual and eternal Guru.

### Guru Khalsa

When the *Shabad*, either through the living human Guru or the Granth Guru, establishes itself firmly in the hearts of human beings, then such human beings are collectively known as the Khalsa (Pure).<sup>583</sup> Since they cannot always be individually equal to the Guru in spiritual knowledge, they are collectively known as the Khalsa Guru or Guru Panth. Their thinking and behaviour is based on the ‘Word’ (*Shabad*) of the Guru, which still remains the real Guru

Here it should be noted that Guru Gobind Singh is commonly but mistakenly understood to have started the words “Khalsa” and ‘Panth’. As will be clear elsewhere in this book, the words ‘Khalsa’ and ‘Panth’ existed before Guru Gobind Singh and were extensively used.<sup>584</sup>

In Sri Guru Granth Sahib we find Bhat Kirat using this word as follows:  
 “ਇਕੁ ਉਤਮ ਪੁੰਥੁ ਸੁਨਿਓ ਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਤਿਹ ਮਿਲੰਤ ਜਮ ਤ੍ਰਾਸ ਮਿਟਾਈ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੬)

The word ‘Panth’ existed even before Guru Nanak but was not ‘Khalsa’ in its character.

<sup>582</sup> ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੬)

<sup>583</sup> ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਰਤੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੨) ॥

<sup>584</sup> ਸਬਦਿ ਜਿਤੀ ਸਿਧ ਮੰਡਲੀ ਕੀਤੋਸੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੁੰਥੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਾ (ਵਾਰ ੧ ਪਉੜੀ ੩੧) ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸਿਕਾ ਜਗਤੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੁੰਥੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ (ਵਾਰ ੧ ਪ.੪੫) See also var 23/1,30/1, 3/5etc

Guru Nanak clarified the concept, the later Gurus developed it and the organisational work was left for Guru Gobind Singh. *“By the time of Guru Gobind Singh a definite code of conduct had been given to the Sikhs, a definite philosophy preached among them, a definite language and script and a definite scripture had been given to them. All this separated the Sikh community from the rest of the population. What was now required was to give this community a definite organisation, which Guru Gobind Singh did.”*<sup>585</sup> As soon as the Sikhs imbibed the full spirit and meaning of ‘Khalsa’, Guru Gobind Singh formally named it ‘Khalsa Panth’. It is an organised group of God-loving, spiritually exalted intellectuals following the Guru in the letter and the spirit of the ‘Word’ (Shabad). Such a group was considered by the Guru to be capable of guiding the Sikh community through taking organisational and religious decisions on his behalf in the light of the Scriptures.<sup>586</sup>

### Pawan Guru

This concept is taken from a hymn, which concludes the Sikh Morning Prayer. It reads, *“Air is the Guru and water is the father the earth acts as mother...”* (Japu)

All life, wherever it exists depends on water. The earth we live on is nearly eighty three percent water. It is not an exaggeration to say that if there is no water there will be no life.<sup>587</sup> Our blood is nearly 55% water by volume and the soft tissue is also composed of nearly 80% water. Since life came out of water the Guru calls it father.<sup>588</sup> The Hindus address water as Indra (see Rig Veda vi 24.7).

Although water is necessary to create life, it is itself composed of two parts of hydrogen and one part of Oxygen, which form a significantly large part of air (ਪਵਣ). In other words it can be said that no life can exist without air (ਪਵਣ) to which water owes its existence.

<sup>585</sup> Advanced history of the Punjab by G.S.Kholsa page 283

<sup>586</sup> ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਹੋਇ ਬਚਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋਇਗਾ ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਕਾ ਤਾਣ ਨਿਬਾਵਿਆਂ ਕਾ ਥਾਉਂ (ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰ ਪੲ) ਤਾਹਿ ਸਮੇਂ ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨ ਸੁਨਾਯੋ ਖਾਲਸ ਅਪਨੇ ਰੂਪ ਬਤਾਇਯੋ ॥ ਖਾਲਸ ਸੋ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਮਮ ਕਾਮਾ ਬਖਸ਼ ਦੀਉ ਖਾਲਸ ਕੋ ਜਾਮਾ ( ਕਵੀ ਸੈਨਾ ਪਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਸੋਭਾ ੮੦੬) ॥ ਅਹੋ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਅੰਗ ਸੰਗ ਸਦ ਹਮ ਹੈਂ ਬਾਰੇ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼)

<sup>587</sup> ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਜੀਉ ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨) ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਜਲੁ ਹੈ ਜਲ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਕੋਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੮੩) ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਕਾ ਫਿਰ ਪਾਣੀ ਸਭ ਖਾਏ (ਪ.੧੨੪੦)

<sup>588</sup> ਪਵਣ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ (ਜਪੁਜੀ),

It is a Divine breath infused in us and helps us in acquiring enlightenment (Word). It is for this reason that air is usually called ‘the breath of spiritual life’ When air is not available for breathing all acquired knowledge is lost.<sup>589</sup> Life without air cannot be imagined. Living cells require oxygen or other constituents of air to start process of division and thus release energy to shape the body. Therefore air (ਪਵਣ) is the Guru in the sense that it is the cause behind the functioning of the intellectual faculties just as a Guru is the cause behind our enlightenment. The body may have all the water it requires, but if there is no air, our faculties pack up. When the material world is described as a reflection of the Almighty, it is only then that the “air” (ਪਵਣ) is called Guru, the carrier of the knowledge of the primordial ‘Word’ (Shabad). Bhai Gurdas translates “*Pawan*” as the Guru’s word (Shabad).<sup>590</sup>

In the above-mentioned hymn the earth is personified as *Dharat Mahat* (ਧਰਤ ਮਹੱਤ= Great mother) and day and night are described as nurses. The day looks after diurnal activities like photosynthesis in plants etc and the night nurtures nocturnal life in animals providing restful sleep. They are, as it were nurturing life in the lap of mother earth. The whole hymn is an allegory, which should not be taken as a material or literal fact because night and day cannot be our physical nurses in the literal sense.

#### Q8. Can we say that Guru is God?

Followers of some religions claim that their religious leaders were God in human form. The Hindus believe that Ram Chandra was God and later God once again appeared as Krishna.<sup>591</sup> Moses is said to have communicated with God through a burning bush. Some Christians believe that Jesus was God but others call him *Son of God*.<sup>592</sup> Later Muhammad challenged the concept of “*Son of God*” when he wrote, “How could God have a son when he had no consort”? (Quran VII 6.102).

<sup>589</sup> ਪਵਨੁ ਵਿਚੋਲਾ ਕਰਤ ਅਕੋਲਾ ਜਲ ਤੇ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੪) ਪਵਣੈ ਕੇ ਵਸਿ ਦੇਹੁਰੀ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਸਚੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩)

<sup>590</sup> ਪਉਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਹੈ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ॥ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੁ ਪੰਥ ਨਿਵਾਣੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥ ਧਰਤੀ ਮਾਤ ਮਹਤ ਕਰਿ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਸੰਜੋਗ ਬਣਾਇਆ॥ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੁ ਬਾਲ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਜਗਤੁ ਖਿਲਾਇਆ (ਵਾਰ ੬)

<sup>591</sup> ਯਦਾ ਯਦਾ ਹਿ ਧਰਮੱਸਯ ਗਿਲਾਨਿਰ ਭਵਤਿ ਭਾਰਤ॥ ਅਭੀਯੁੱਤ ਬਾਨਮ ਅਧਰਮੱਸਯ ਤਦਾਆਤਮਾਨਮ ਸ੍ਰਿਜਾਮੀਯਾਹਮ (ਗੀਤਾ ਅਧਿ ੪.੭) As and when righteousness suffers, I take birth as an incarnation to establish justice and fairplay. It is ironic that according to Skand Puran Lord Krishna was killed in Gir forest by a hunter named Jar with an arrow. His dead body lay there unattended until only bones remained. In 1076 AD Raja Anant Varma erected a temple in memory of Krishna at Jagannath Puri (Orissa-India) This temple came to be known as *Jagan Nath* (protector of the world) and is now visited by millions of Hindus every year. There used to be a tradition that anybody who fell under the chariot carrying

Although Guru Nanak boldly denied being a prophet,<sup>593</sup> Avtar or Son of God there are many Sikhs who think that God himself was born as Nanak.<sup>594</sup> Ironically in the same breath they also repeat the following lines (supposedly) written by Guru Gobind Singh, “*All those who call me God will fall into the pit of hell.*”<sup>595</sup> This idea of a human God contradicts the philosophy of Guru Nanak according to whom God is ‘unborn’ and without parents.<sup>596</sup>

Obviously, if Guru Nanak was God then the Sikhs must also admit that God is not ਅਜੂਨੀ and ਸੈਭੰ.<sup>597</sup> Again Since our four Gurus Guru Nanak (1469-153), Guru Angad (1504-1552), Guru Amar Das (1470-1574) and Guru Ram Das (1519-1581) were contemporary and lived at the same time, we will have to admit that at one time there were four Gods.

This impression (calling Guru Nanak God) appears to have resulted from faulty interpretation of Gurbani. There are some Shabads, which have been interpreted to mean that Guru is literally God. Before we take up some of those *Shabads* let us consider some attributes of God as stated by our Gurus.

### 1.ਸੋ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਅਨੰਤ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਬਿਆਪਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਗਵੰਤ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ.੨੯੩)

---

the statue of Krishna and gave up his ghost would go to heaven. Millions went to heaven like this until the British Government of India stopped this practice.

<sup>592</sup> Matthew 3-17 John 1-14 Mark 14-61 Luke 1-32 Here and there Christ is also called God .See John 5-17

<sup>593</sup> ਹਮ ਆਦਮੀ ਹਾਂ ਇਕ ਦਮੀ ਮੁਹਲਤਿ ਮੁਹਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ (ਪੰਨਾ 660) ਹਮ ਸਹ ਕੇਰੀਆ ਦਾਸੀਆ ਸਾਚਾ ਖਸਮੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੯) ਪੰਚ ਤਤੁ ਕਰਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਭ ਸਾਜੀ ਕੋਈ ਛੇਵਾ ਕਰਿਉ ਜੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੬) ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਮਿਲਿ ਭਇਓ ਸੰਜੋਗਾ ਇਨ ਮਹਿ ਕਵਨ ਦੁਰਤੋ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੯੯)

<sup>594</sup> J.S.Grewal and Irfan Habib in their “*Sikh History from Persian Sources*” (page 66) quote Dabistan- e-Mazahib in which Mobad writes, “*I did not see any Sikh who does not consider Baba Nanak to be God*”.

<sup>595</sup> “ ਜੇ ਹਮ ਕੇ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਉਚਰਿ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਨਰਕ ਕੁੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਪਰਿ ਹੈ। (੩੨)

<sup>596</sup> ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ (ਜਪੁਜੀ)॥ ਨਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਸੁਤ ਬੰਧਨ ਨਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਕਾਮੁ ਨ ਨਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੭) ਨਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਸੁਤ ਭਾਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੨੧). Bhai Gurdas tells us that “ਬਾਬਾ ਪੈਧਾ ਸਚ ਖੰਡ ਨੋਨਿਧ ਨਾਮ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਪਾਈ” (ਵਾਰ ੧-੨੪.੪). If Guru Nanak was God what need was there for him to visit *Sach Khand* and receive ਨੋਨਿਧ ਨਾਮ ? Who did he receive it from? Was there another superior God?

<sup>597</sup> I heard a Sikh in a local Gurdwara in Nottingham announcing that Sikhs have ten Gods. I wonder if the announcer had read ਗੁਰ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਇਕ ਹੈ ਸਚਾ ਸਾਹ ਜਗਤ ਵਣਜਾਰਾ (ਵਾਰ ੧/੧੭). ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਉ ਅਨੰਤ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੯), ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੦) ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਧਣੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੫) ਏਕੋ ਕਰਤਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭੪) ਏਕੋ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪੇ ਆਪ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੧) ਏਕੋ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗੁ ਕੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੮੮)

(He is within us and without us and is limitless. God resides in everything)  
598

2. ਅਨਿਕ ਬਿਸਥਾਰ ਏਕ ਤੇ ਭਏ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੯)

(Uncountable expansions resulted out of Him)

3. ਸਹਸ ਤਵ ਨੈਨ ਨਨ ਨੈਨ ਹਹਿ ਤੋਹਿ ਕਉ (ਮ:੧ ਪ. ੧੩)

(You have innumerable eyes and yet no physical eye)

4. ਓਹੁ ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦੀ ਜੁਗਹੁ ਜੁਗ ਪੂਰਾ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ (ਮ:੫ ੩੯੭)

(He existed before time began and He existed when the creation started. He is perfect.

5. ਆਇ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕਿਰਪਾਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੮)

(My compassionate Lord is neither born nor does He die)

Obviously the above statements cannot be applied to Guru Nanak or any other human being. We celebrate the Guru's birthdays year after year and know that he did not have more than two physical eyes and was not unborn (ਅਜੂਨੀ) and immortal (ਅਕਾਲ). The Guru himself says that he is human. ਹਮ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਏਕੈ ਓਹੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੧) We also know from Gurbani that God is invisible (ਅਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ) but this cannot be said of our Gurus. When Guru Nanak says, "ਨਿਧਨਿਆ ਧਨੁ ਨਿਗੁਰਿਆਂ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆ ਤੂ ਮਾਣ" (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ.੯੯੨) we cannot reasonably argue that he was praising himself and inflating his ego uttering the above lines.

Now consider the following lines:

1. "You are the Great Primal Being, the most Inaccessible and Unfathomable Lord God; I search for You, but cannot find Your depth. You are the farthest of the far, beyond the beyond, O my Lord and Master; You alone know Yourself, O Lord of the Universe." <sup>599</sup>

<sup>598</sup> ਜਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਪੂਰਨ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੮) ਦੀਦਹ ਬਰ ਦੀਦਾਰਿ ਹਕ ਗਰ ਮਬਤਲਾਸਤ,ਹਰਿ ਚਿ ਮੇ ਬੀਨੀ ਬਚਸਮਤ ਹੱਕ ਨੁਮਾਸਤ (ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਆਲੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਨਿਗਾਹ ਮਾਰ ਉਹ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੈ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)॥

<sup>599</sup> ਤੁਮ੍ਹ੍ ਵਡ ਪੁਰਖ ਬਡ ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਹਰਿ ਢੂਢਿ ਰਹੇ ਪਾਈ ਨਹੀ ਹਾਥ ॥ ਤੂ ਪਰੈ ਪਰੈ ਅਪਰੰਪਰੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਤੂ ਆਪਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਆਪਿ ਜਗੰਨਾਥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੯੬)

2. “You are my Father, and You are my Mother. You are my Soul, my Breath of Life, and the Giver of Peace. You are my Lord and Master; I am Your slave. Without You, I have no one at all. Please bless me with Your Mercy, God, and give me this gift, that I may sing Your Praises, day and night.”<sup>600</sup>

3. Having attacked Khuraasaan, he terrified Hindustan. The Creator Himself does not take the blame, but has sent the Mughul as the messenger of death. There was so much slaughter that the people screamed. Didn’t You feel compassion, Lord?<sup>601</sup>

4. “The Saviour has saved the child, and cured his fever. I have been saved, in the True Guru’s Sanctuary; service to Him does not go in vain.”<sup>602</sup>

5. “The Lord saved me from Sulhi Khan. The Emperor did not succeed in his plot, and he died in disgrace.”<sup>603</sup>

Can God utter the above lines unless we believe that God was referring to another superior God?

The idea seems to have originated from certain mystic expressions, which have been interpreted out of context to mean that the Guru was God. Some of these lines are listed below with translation.

1. “The Lord Himself wielded His Power and expanded throughout the universe. The Formless Lord took form (became Sargun), and with His Light He illuminated the whole universe. He is All-pervading. The Lamp of the Shabad (the Word) has been lit.”(AGGS P.1395)<sup>604</sup>

<sup>600</sup> ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹਉ ਦਾਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ॥ ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੋ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦਾਤਿ ॥ ਤੁਮ੍ਹਰੀ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਕਰਉ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤਿ

<sup>601</sup> ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੁ ਡਰਾਇਆ ॥ ਆਪੈ ਚੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚਤਾਇਆ ॥ ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੬੦). This refers to the year 1519AD when Panjab was ruled by Daulat Khan’s sons Ghazi Khan and Dilawar Khan who were attacked by Babar, the Emperor of Afghanistan. The inhabitants of Syedpur resisted resulting in terrible fiendish slaughter and carnage. Their wives and children were carried away in captivity and their houses demolished.

<sup>602</sup> ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰੈ ਰਾਖਿਓ ਬਾਰਿਕੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਤਾਪੁ ਉਤਾਰਿਆ ॥ ਉਬਰੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਨ ਬਿਰਥੀ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਸੂਖ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਫੁਨਿ ਸੂਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਭਏ ਦਇਆਲਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਘਨੁ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ ਕੋਊ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹੋਆ ਕਿਰਪਾਲਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧੯)

<sup>603</sup> ਸੁਲਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਰਾਖੁ ॥ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਕਾ ਹਾਥੁ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਪਹੁਚੈ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਮੂਆ ਨਾਪਾਕੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨੫)

<sup>604</sup> ਆਪਿ ਨਰਾਇਣੁ ਕਲਾ ਧਾਰਿ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪਰਵਰਿਯਉ ॥ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰਿ ਆਕਾਰੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗ ਮੰਡਲਿ ਕਰਿਯਉ ॥ ਜਹ ਕਹ ਤਹ ਭਰਪੂਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਦੀਪਕਿ ਦੀਪਯਉ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੯੫)

“The embodiment of light, the Lord manifested Himself through Nanak. He gave place to Guru Angad; His essence was absorbed into Angad’s essence. Guru Angad showed His mercy and established Amar Das as the True Guru.” (AGGS page 1408)<sup>605</sup>

2. “O Mathra, say this without hesitation that there is no difference between God and Guru; Guru Arjun is the visible Personification of the Lord Himself. (God is reflected in Guru Arjan’s words and deeds.” (AGGS P.1409)<sup>606</sup> We should also note that some words change their meanings in different contexts. For example the word ਪਰਮੇਸਰ does not always mean ‘God’. In our ordinary conversation, the Sikh ladies call their husband ਪਤੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ,<sup>607</sup> which simply means that they offer him the top-most respect. We also say ਇਕ ਸਿਖ ਦੋਇ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤ ਪੰਜੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ. It is used in the same sense in Gurbani and *Janam Sakhi*. For example God is recorded as having addressed Guru Nanak as “Parmesar” (God).<sup>608</sup> Obviously there could not be two *Parmesars* at the same time. Similar verses of being one with God can be found in the writings of many other spiritual writers For example Kabir says, “God and Kabir are one and the same thing. No one can find any difference between them.”<sup>609</sup> It is in this sense that we find our Gurus mentioned as highly virtuous human beings (embodiments of God). God invested Guru Nanak with mystical light of the “Word” (Shabad) and thus made him His mouthpiece.<sup>610</sup>

<sup>605</sup> ਜੋਤਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹਾਯਉ ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਭਯਉ ਤਤ ਸਿਉ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਯਉ ॥ ਅੰਗਦਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਰੁ ਕੀਅਉ ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸਿ ਅਮਰਤੁ ਛਤ੍ਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਹਿ ਦੀਅਉ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਰਸਿ ਕਹਿ ਮਥੁਰਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਯਣ ॥ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਪੰਚ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਪਿਖਹੁ ਨਯਣ. Mark the words “ਜੋਤਿ ਰੂਪਿ” which means ethereal light not physical. Guru Nanak was spiritually one with God not physically.

<sup>606</sup> ਭਣ ਮਥਰਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਰਜਨ ਪ੍ਰਤਖ ਹਰਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੯)। Guru Arjan is a perfect human being with Godly virtues.

<sup>607</sup> It is in this sense Bhai Gurdas wrote, “ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ ਹੈ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਸੋਇ” (ਵਾਰ ੩੮/੨੦)

<sup>608</sup> ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ, ਅਰ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ (ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ)

<sup>609</sup> “ਰਾਮ ਕਬੀਰਾ ਏਕ ਭਏ ਹੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਪਛਾਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੯) ਰਾਮ ਕਬੀਰਾ ਰਵਿ ਰਹੇ ਅਵਰ ਤਜੇ ਸਭ ਕਾਮ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੬੬) ਕਬੀਰ ਕਾ ਮਰਮੁ ਰਾਮ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੮) ਤੂੰ ਤੂੰ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੁਆ, ਮੁਝ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਾ ਨ ਹੂੰ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭੫) In the same vein Bhagat Ravi Das wrote, “ਤੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਤੋਹੀ ਅੰਤਰੁ ਕੈਸਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੩). Shamas Tabrez wrote, “ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਸੁਦਮ ਤੂੰ ਮਨ ਸੁਦੀ ਮਨ ਤਨ ਸੁਦਮ ਤੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਸੁਦੀ (You are me and I am you. I am body and you are the soul in it. Mansur said, “ਅਨਲਹੱਕ” (I am God). Christ said, “My father and I are one” (Acts 1:11)

<sup>610</sup> ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਪੁ ਰਖਿਓਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੬੬) (He infused his light in the Guru and thus manifested Himself to the world) ਮਰਦਾਨਿ ਖੁਦਾ ਖੁਦਾਨੁਮਾ ਆਮਦਾ ਅੰਦ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)= ਰੱਬ ਦੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਰੱਬ ਵਰਗੇ ਬਣਕੇ ਹੀ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ॥

Later the same mystical subtlety of the ‘Word’ (Shabad) was passed on to Guru Angad, who became similarly enlightened.

It must however be kept in mind that although the Guru is not incarnated God his status among humans is spiritually the highest nearing to God. Bhai Gurdas states, “ਇਕ ਬਾਬਾ ਅਕਾਲ ਰੂਪ ਦੂਜਾ ਰਬਾਬੀ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ” (ਵਾਰ ੧/੩੫). A Sikh offers the same respect and devotion to his Gurus as he would offer to God without putting the Guru on God’s throne.<sup>611</sup> The Guru is to God as a wave is to the ocean.<sup>612</sup> The wave is different but still a part of the same ocean having all the qualities of the oceanic water.<sup>613</sup> This indicates that it is not sufficient to have a Guru but that the Guru must be like God capable of passing his celestial knowledge to his followers through the ‘Word’ (Shabad).

Guru Nanak himself says, “*I was a minstrel out of work when the Lord took me into His service. To sing His Praises day and night, He gave me His Order, right from the start. My Lord and Master summoned me, His minstrel, to the True Mansion of His Presence. He dressed me in the robes of His True Praise and Glory. The Ambrosial Nectar of the True Name became my food. Those who follow the Guru’s Teachings are satisfied and find peace. His minstrel spreads His Glory, singing and vibrating His ‘Word’.* O Nanak, praising the True Lord, I have obtained Him.” (AGGS P.150)<sup>614</sup>

Except the zealots among the Sikhs, no man else believes that Baba Nanak was God.

*“There are some who have tried to impose upon the ignorant by asserting that Nanak was an incarnation of the deity and that he worked miracles...the same assertions are made in favour of every person who is*

<sup>611</sup> ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਭਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ.੪੪੨) ਖਾਸਾਨਿ ਹਜ਼ਰਤ ਕਿਬਰੀਆ ਖਾਕਬੋਸਿ ਅਕਦਾਮਸ ਵ ਪਾਕਾਨਿ ਮਲਾਏ ਆਅਲਾ ਹਲਕਾ ਬਗੋਸ਼ ਵ ਗੁਲਾਮਸ਼” (ਗੰਜ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) ॥ ਰਬ ਦੇ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ (ਗੁਰੂ ਪੀਰ) ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਲੋਕ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਵੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਧੂੜੀ ਚੁੰਮਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਦਾਸ ਜਾਂ ਫਰਿਸ਼ਤੇ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ॥

<sup>612</sup> ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਅਰੁ ਫੇਨ ਬੁਦਬੁਦਾ ਜਲ ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਨ ਹੋਈ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੮੫)

<sup>613</sup> ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਉਠਹਿ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤੀ,ਫਿਰ ਸਲਲੇ ਸਲਲ ਸਮਾਇਦਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੭੬) ਮੋਜੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਗਰਚਿ ਦਰ ਮਾਅਨੀ ਯਕੋਸਤ॥ ਲੋਕ ਅੰਦਰ ਈਨੇ ਆਂ ਫਰਕੇ ਬਸੋਸਤ (ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)= ਲਹਿਰ ਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਅਸਲੋਂ ਇਕ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਰਕ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ ॥ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸੋ ਹਰਿ ਜੇਹਾ ॥ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਜਾਣਹ ਮਾਣਸ ਦੇਹਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੭੬)

<sup>614</sup> ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੈ ਮਹਲਿ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਚਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਆਇਆ ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਖਾਧਾ ਰਜਿ ਤਿਨਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਢਾਢੀ ਕਰੇ ਪਸਾਉ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੦) ਹਮ ਆਦਮੀ ਹਾਂ ਇਕ ਦਮੀ ਮੁਹਲਤਿ ਮੁਹਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੦)



renowned for sanctity or virtue.” (R.N.Cust -*The life of Baba Nanak*)

### Q9. Is Gurbani the direct ‘Word’ of God?

As stated earlier the real Guru is the *Shabad* (Word) and not the mortal frame of a human being. Most Sikhs believe that *Gurbani* is the revealed word of God, a spiritual representation of God’s intentions. However there are some who believe that God sent the exact linguistic units and the Sikh Gurus simply acted as clerks to record them. The idea may have been borrowed from Islam where every dot and dash of the Quran is usually believed to have been dictated to Muhammad by God through angel Gabriel.<sup>615</sup>

Intellectuals are of the view that the enlightened intellect of the Gurus imbibed the spirit of the Lord’s commands and translated them for their followers.<sup>616</sup> In other words what the Guru received were the mystical ‘ideas’ or ‘concepts’ and not the exact verses or words. At one stage or the other (for example in writing the Hymns) the human agency was involved. It is because of this that earlier copies of the Sikh Holy Granth contain texts, which have been written and then defaced.<sup>617</sup> Also there are some hymns, which are recorded at more than one place. Here and there even the sequence of verses is different from the present volume. We cannot assume that God is fallible. Again the following points need to be understood.

1. If God wrote all this poetry then the names of the Bhagats and the Gurus should not have appeared in the Granth as writers of these hymns. How could Guru Nanak say, “*Servant Nanak chants the Glorious Words of the Guru’s Bani; through them, one is absorbed into the Naam, the Name of the Lord.*” (AGGS P. 494)<sup>618</sup>

<sup>615</sup> It is commonly believed that revelation comes in ideas and concepts embodying Truth. It does not come in linguistic units.

<sup>616</sup> “ਬਾਣੀ ਉਚਰਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਜਨ, ਹੁਇ ਰੁਸਨਾਈ ਮਿਟਿਹਿ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ” (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰ ੧.੩੮)

<sup>617</sup> ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ “ਦੇਖੋ ਲੋਗਾ” (੩੫) ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਕੱਟਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰਾਂ ਮਾਰੂ ਰਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਮੀਰਾਂ ਬਾਈ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਕੱਟ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਬੰਨੋ ਵਾਲੀ ਬੀੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਪਰਵਾਣਤ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀ ਲਿਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਮੀਰਾਂ ਬਾਈ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ।

<sup>618</sup> ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਗੁਣ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੪)

2. Baba Farid says “*Farid, those who did not enjoy their Spouse when their hair was black — hardly any of them enjoy Him when their hair turns grey.*” AGGS p.1378)<sup>619</sup> but Guru Amar Das contradicted it by saying, “*Farid, whether one’s hair is black or grey, our Lord and Master is always here if one remembers Him.*”(AGGS P.1378)<sup>620</sup> We cannot say that God made a mistake and then after 300 years corrected the mistake.<sup>621</sup>

3 “ਤੂੰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਜੋਨ ਨਾ ਆਵਹੀ” Who was God calling Parbraham Parmesar? Was there another God beside Him?

4. Gurbani clearly says, “ਬਲਵੰਡ ਤਥਾ ਸਤੇ ਭੂਮ ਆਖੀ”॥ Are we wiser than Guru Arjan Dev and contradict him by saying that it was uttered by God (ਧੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ) and not uttered by Satta and Balwand? Here mark the word ਆਖੀ (composed or uttered).

5. All hymns are identified by the names of their writers. Their styles and dictions are easily recognisable. Guru Arjan Dev has clearly distinguished them by writing Mohalla or names of the writers with the hymns. Why would Guru Arjan Dev pass God’s writing under the names of the Gurus and Bhagats?

6 If God sent all the verses of the Granth Sahib (ਧੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ), how do we interpret the following and what was the purpose of God in sending this hymn to us?

(i) The poison had absolutely no harmful effect, but the wicked Brahmin died in pain.

(AGGS p, 1137)<sup>622</sup>

<sup>619</sup> ਫਰੀਦਾ ਕਾਲੀ ਜਿਨੀ ਨ ਰਾਵਿਆ ਧਉਲੀ ਰਾਵੈ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭੮)”

<sup>620</sup> ਫਰੀਦਾ ਕਾਲੀ ਧਉਲੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਚਿਤਿ ਕਰੇ ॥ ਆਪਣਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਪਿਰਮੁ ਨ ਲਗਈ ਜੇ ਲੋਚੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੭੮)”.

<sup>621</sup> ਨਹੀ ਹੋਤ ਕਛੁ ਦੇਉ ਬਾਰਾ ॥ ਕਰਨੈਹਾਰੁ ਨ ਭੁਲਨਹਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫੩)

<sup>622</sup> ਲੇਪੁ ਨ ਲਾਗੇ ਤਿਲ ਕਾ ਮੂਲਿ ॥ ਦੁਸਟੁ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਮੂਆ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਸੂਲ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੩੭)

(ii) The Lord saved me from Sulhi Khan. The Emperor did not succeed in his plot, and he died in disgrace. The Lord and Master raised His axe, and chopped off his head; in an instant, he was reduced to dust. Plotting and planning evil, he was destroyed. The One who created him, gave him a push. Of his sons, friends and wealth, nothing remains; he departed, leaving behind all his brothers and relatives. (AGGS p.825)<sup>623</sup>

(iii) “Such devastation has occurred. Didn’t you feel pain?  
(AGGS p.722)<sup>624</sup>

Who was saying this to whom?

The misunderstanding appears to have gained ground through misinterpretation of certain hymns. Here are some, which are commonly quoted.

1. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੨)

Here the word ਆਵੈ is translated as coming from God. In fact it is used in the same sense as we say, “ਮੈਨੂੰ ਗਾਉਣਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ” (I do not know how to sing). The correct translation of the verse therefore is, “O Lalo I can pass only as much knowledge of God’s commands as I understand.” The whole hymn is translated hereunder:

“As I understand the message, so do I interpret it, O Lalo. Bringing the marriage party of sin, Babar has invaded from Kabul, demanding our land as his wedding gift, O Lalo. Modesty and righteousness both have vanished, and falsehood struts around like an autocrat, O Lalo. The *Qazis* and the Brahmins have abandoned their roles, and Satan now conducts the marriage rites, O Lalo. The Muslim women read the Koran, and in their misery, they call upon God, O Lalo. The Hindu women of high social status, and others of lowly status as well, are included in the same category, O Lalo. (AGGS Page722)

If we believe that God dictates the Gurbani then God himself is to blame for Babar’s invasion and has no right to complain. Is God powerless before people like Babar?

2. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ

<sup>623</sup> ਸੁਲਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਰਾਖੁ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਕਾ ਹਾਥੁ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਪਹੁਚੈ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਮੁਆ ਨਾਪਾਕੁ ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨੫)

<sup>624</sup> ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕੁਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦ ਨ ਆਇਆ ..... (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੨੨)

(ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ.੩੦੮)

O Sikhs accept the Guru's word as "perfect truth" because the Guru is divinely prompted by God to utter it.

3. ਦਾਸਨ ਦਾਸ ਕਹੈ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇਹਾ ਤੂੰ ਕਹਾਇਇਹ ਤੇਹਾ ਹਉ ਕਰੀ ਵਖਿਆਨ

(ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩)

The servant of thy servants Nanak says only what You inspire him to say.

4. ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਖਜਾਨਾ ਬਖਸਿਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਨਾਨਕਿ ਕੀਆ ਪਸਾਉ ਜੀਉ

(ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੩)

On my own I have no power to even move my tongue (preach). I am simply conveying God's *Hukam* to the humanity. God blessed Nanak with the treasure of his *Bhakti* and Nanak's enlightened house is spreading it everywhere.

5. ਤਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਹਣੁ ਜਾ ਤੁਝੈ ਕਹਾਇਆ (ਮ:੧ ਪੰਨਾ ੫੬੬)

I started expressing your commands only when You prompted me to express them.

6. Another half sentence is quoted by some people to prove that Gurbani came from God. This line reads, " ਇਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੬).<sup>625</sup> These lines have nothing to do with the origin of Gurbani. They are about God and His justice. We give below the English translation of this whole hymn.

*"Blessed, blessed the Creator, the primal being, our Lord and master. He himself sits and dispenses true justice. One who slanders the perfect Guru is punished and destroyed by the True Lord. This word (justice or pronouncement) is fixed by the Lord who created the Universe."* (AGGS page 306)

7. ਧੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਆਈ ਤਿਨਿ ਸਗਲੀ ਚਿੰਤ ਮਿਟਾਈ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੮)

<sup>625</sup> ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੇ ਕੀ ਸੋ ਸਾਚੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਪਚਾਇਆ ॥ ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੬)

This hymn is most often quoted to prove that Gurbani came direct from God. Here the word “ਧੁਰ” Needs to be understood. When we talk about something coming to us (as from old) we do not use the word “ਧੁਰ” but “ਧੁਰੋਂ” or ਧੁਰਹੁ”.<sup>626</sup> On the other hand when we talk of something going away then we say “ਧੁਰ ਦੀ/ਦਾ or ਧੁਰ ਕੀ /ਕਾ” For example ਅਸੀਂ ਧੁਰੋਂ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਆਏ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਧੁਰ ਦੀ ਟਿਕਟ ਲੈ ਲਈ ਸੀ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਧੁਰ ਦਾ ਸਾਥ ਮਿਲ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ । ਧੁਰ ਕੀ refers to future **not past**.

The exact translation of the hymn should be, “All worries are now gone because *Bani* has been received which will guide us to the end of our mortal lives.”(In other words ‘Bani’ is eternal). We print here our own translation:

ਸੋਰਠਿ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸਰਿ ਦਿਤਾ ਬੰਨਾ ॥ ਦੁਖ ਰੋਗ ਕਾ ਡੇਰਾ ਭੰਨਾ ॥ ਅਨਦ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਰ ਨਾਰੀ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਭ ਥਾਈ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪੂਰਨ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਭਨੀ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਧੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਆਈ ॥ ਤਿਨਿ ਸਗਲੀ ਚਿੰਤ ਮਿਟਾਈ ॥ ਦਇਆਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨਾ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚੁ ਵਖਾਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੮ )

The Lord God has given us a prop (*Gurbani*). The house of pain and disease has been demolished by *Gurbani*. Let men and women celebrate. The Lord God, Har, Har, has blessed us with His Mercy. O pious people, there is now peace and comfort everywhere because people have come to believe that The Supreme Lord is pervading everywhere. All worries and anxieties have now vanished because *Gurbani* has been received to guide us for all times. The Lord has been compassionate. Nanak’s house has been preaching the True gospel. (AGGS page 628)

#### 7 . ਨਾਨਕ ਬੋਲੈ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਬੋਲਾਇਆ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੭੧)

Nanak preaches only because he is exhorted by the Lord to preach.

#### 8. ਬੋਲੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੇ ਭਾਣੈ ਦਾਸੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਖਾਣੈ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੯)

The slave speaks as it pleases the Lord and utters mystical spiritual ‘Word’.

#### 9. ਜੈਸਾ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸਿਆ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਪੁਕਾਰਿ (ਮ:੫ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੪)

<sup>626</sup> ਧੁਰਹੁ ਆਪਿ ਖੁਆਇਅਨੁ ਜੂਐ ਬਾਜੀ ਹਾਰੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੯) ਧੁਰਹੁ ਖਸਮਿ ਭੋਜਿਆ ਸਚੈ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਪਠਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੦) ਧੁਰਹੁ ਵਿਛੁੰਨੀ ਕਿਉ ਮਿਲੈ ਗਰਬਿ ਮੁਠੀ ਬਿਲਲਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦) ਧੁਰਹੁ ਵਿਛੁੰਨੇ ਧਾਰੀ ਰੁੰਨੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩੫) ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ਵਿਜੋਗੁ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਹੀ ਹੂਆ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੦੭) ਧੁਰਹੁ ਵਿਛੁੰਨੀ ਕਿਉ ਮਿਲੈ ਗਰਬਿ ਮੁਠੀ ਬਿਲਲਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੦) ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੦) ਧੁਰੋਂ ਗਰਬੀ ਮੰਗ ਮੈਂ ਆਇਆ ਜਗਤ ਤੇ, ਪੀਆਂ ਅਰਸ਼ ਦੀ ਤੁਲ ਪਲਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਪੌਣ ਖਾਂ (ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ)

I have expressed only the concepts as received by me from my Guru.

10 ਜਿਉ ਬੋਲਾਵਹਿ ਤਿਉ ਬੋਲਹ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਨ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਸੁ ਗਾਇਓ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਅਤਿ ਪਿਆਰੀ (੫੦੮)

As You inspire me to preach, so do I preach, O Lord Master. What other power do I have? , O Nanak, sing His Praises in the holy congregation because the company of the holy is very dear to God. (AGGS page 508)

Clarifying the issue further the Guru himself says, ਸਬਦੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਵਣਿਆ (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੫) “The divine ‘Word’ manifests itself in ambrosial *Bani* and the Guru orientated people present it to others for hearing.

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਬਣੀਐ (ਮ:੪ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦੪)

The Guru’s instruction is the reflection of Primal Truth. We should try to live by it.

*“He did not claim for his writings, replete as they were with wisdom and devotion, the merit of a direct transcription of the words of God; nor did he say that his own preaching required or would be sanctioned by miracles.” J.D.Cunningham (A history of the Sikhs)*

**Q10. In spite of so many available Rehat Namas written by prominent Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh, why did SGPC produce yet another Rehat Maryada?**

*Rehat* means a way of life or code of conduct. The moral and spiritual code for the Sikhs had been devised and fully explained in the Guru Granth Sahib. What the Sikhs had not yet acquired fully was an organisational code of conduct, which becomes a necessity when more and more people join in. Guru Gobind Singh issued oral instructions to the Khalsa from time to time to promulgate it. These were later reduced to writing by the followers of the Guru and came to be known as *Rehat Namas*. The most important of these *Rehat Namas* are those of Bhai Dya Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Nand Lal who were all Guru Gobind Singh’s contemporaries.

Since organisation depends on circumstances and situations, which keep changing, Guru Gobind Singh did not feel the necessity to codify the

organisational code forever. However his methodology and the thinking behind that methodology have reached us from various sources some of them authentic and the others not so authentic.

After the liberation of Gurdwaras from the corrupt Mahants in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was felt necessary to keep the Sikhs united for other such eventualities and to bring about uniformity in their social functions and temporal observances. A committee was set up which examined all available sources (37-40 *Rehat Namas*) and found that most of the available material had been corrupted during the period of the eighteenth century when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded by the Mughal Government. The SGPC accepted only those rites and rituals, which matched with the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and were also recorded in a majority of the available source material. In 1936 AD they produced the *Rehat Maryada*, which all Sikhs are supposed to follow today. The *Rehat Maryada* itself states, “ *The Rehat Maryada is an attempt by a dedicated group of renowned Sikh scholars to summarise the main teachings of the Gurus and outline the Sikh way of life in consultation with Rehat Namas of the ancient Sikhs and scholars of the Guru period.*”

A question is sometimes raised as to why the *Rehat Namas* of prominent Sikhs who were Guru Gobind Singh's close associates rejected out of hand. Gursikhs like Bhai Dya Singh (one of the Panj Pyaras), and Bhai Nand Lal (close associate of the Guru) and Bhai Prahlad Singh (The Guru's childhood friend) must have understood the Guru's instructions correctly and only then recorded them in their *Rehat Namas*.

A close study of the available *Rehat Namas* reveals caveats in them.<sup>627</sup> Here are some of them. (1) They contradict each other and sometimes contradict themselves (2) There is no evidence that they were actually written by the people under whose names they appear. (3) One and the same person has written more than one *Rehat Nama*.

---

<sup>627</sup> Shamshwer Singh Ashok (P.60), Dr. Trilochan Singh and Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha (Gurmat Sudhakar p.251 and 261) consider most of the available *Rehat Namas* as fake. Some copying from one to the other is very obvious and many of them have been written by non-Sikhs. For example Nand Lal's *Rehat Nama* is believed to have been written by Pindi Lal's brother. There are incompatibilities with time line. Words like ਅਫਸਰ and ਚਾਹ used in *Rehat Namas* indicate their writing to be of the later 18th or early nineteenth century.

For example Bhai Nand Lal is accredited with three (*Rehat Nama*, *Tankhah Nama* and *Sakhi Rehat*) (4) Their language is not that of Guru Gobind Singh's period. (5) More than one edition of one and the same *Rehat Nama* are available with different subject matter. (6) If a *Rehat Nama* were necessary the Guru would have produced one himself or at least authenticated one written by one of his devoted followers.<sup>628</sup>

It is a general opinion that although the prominent Sikhs may have written some *Rehat Namas*, they have been deliberately corrupted at some time. Some of them are definitely written by non-Sikhs and registered under the names of the Guru's near associates to give them an air of credibility.

Bhai Nand Lal, Bhai Prahlad Singh, Bhai Dya Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh, Bhai Kesar Singh Chhiber, Bhai Desa Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh are supposed to have written some of the available *Rehat Namas*. Titles also include *Mukat Nama*, *Wajab-ul-Arz* and *Rehat Nama Akal Purkh Ji Ka* (issued in 1856 by Nirankari Darbara Singh). Space does not permit us to examine all of them here but we will briefly discuss a few.

### 1. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Nand Lal

(i) This *Rehat Nama* talks of “Sharadh”(A Hindu ritual-feast), which is criticised in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru says, “*He does not honour his ancestors while they are alive, but he holds ritual feasts in their honour after they have died. Tell me, how can his poor ancestors receive what the crows and the dogs have eaten up?*”<sup>629</sup>

Against this *Rehat Nama*, Bhai Dya Singh writes “One should not observe *Sharadh* by wearing *Janeu* (sacred Hindu thread). Instead one should stick to the Guru's instruction and observe prayers to God”.<sup>630</sup>

(ii) Again this *Rehat Nama* says that women are not trustworthy and should not be permitted to sing hymns.<sup>631</sup> The Guru says, “Why call women inferior when they give birth to great men”.

<sup>628</sup> No *Rehat Nama* is recorded in the Dasam Granth.

<sup>629</sup> “ਅਤੇ ਜੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਧ ਆਵਨ ਤਾਂ ਛੱਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦ ਕਰੈ (ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ)। ਪਰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ “ਜੀਵਤ ਪਿਤਰ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਊ ਮੂਏਂ ਸਿਰਾਧ ਕਰਾਹੀ ॥ ਪਿਤਰ ਭੀ ਬਪੁਰੇ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਕਊਆ ਕੂਕਰ ਖਾਹੀ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੨) ਜੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਧ ਬਿਵਾਹ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੇ ਕਰਾਵੇ, ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ ਸੇ ਤਨਖਾਹਿਆ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਯਾ ਸਿੰਘ ੨੫) ਬੋਦੀ ਧੌਤੀ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਮਾਲੈ॥ ਹੋਮ ਸ਼ਰਾਧ ਨ ਖਣਾਹਿ ਸੰਭਾਲੈ (ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਅਧਯਾਯ ੨੪)

<sup>630</sup> ਜਨੇਊ ਪਾਇਕੇ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਸ਼ਾਧ ਪਿੰਡ ਆਦਿਕ ਨ ਕਰੇ । ਸਭ ਜੁਗਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਸੇ ਕਰੇ (ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਯਾ ਸਿੰਘ)

<sup>631</sup> ਤ੍ਰਿਨੀਆ ਰਾਗ ਸੁਣੇ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਏ, ਸੁਣੇ ਲਾਲ ਸੇ ਜਮਪੁਰ ਜਾਇ (ਤਨਖਾਹ ਨਾਮਾ ਭ: ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) “ਇਸਤਰੀ ਜਾਮੇ ਤੇ ਵਿਸਾਹੁ ਨ ਕਰਨਾ” (ਰਹਿਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ) । ਪ੍ਰੰਤੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ , “ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ(ਪੰਨਾ ੪੨੩)



(iii) The *Rehat Nama* itself tells us that it was written in Maghar Samat vadi 9 Samat 1752 (1695AD).<sup>632</sup> It also states that Guru Granth Sahib was given the status of a Guru.<sup>633</sup> This is incompatible with time line. The Guruship was bestowed on Guru Granth Sahib in October 1708 (13 years after the writing of this *Rehat Nama*).

## 2. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Prahald Singh

(i) The writer himself proudly declares that he is Hans Raj Brahman. Such statement of caste pride cannot be accepted from a baptised Sikh who had stayed all his life with the Guru.<sup>634</sup> Even otherwise Brahmans are discredited in the Guru Granth Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh himself said, “If they (the Sikhs) adopt the Brahman’s ways I will not trust them.”<sup>635</sup>

(ii) The writer claims that Guru Gobind Singh himself told the writer to prepare a *Rehat Nama*<sup>636</sup> but later admits that he was prompted by some Gurmukh Singh to prepare the document.<sup>637</sup> This *Rehatam Nama* claims that it records the direct words of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>638</sup>

(iii) This *Rehat Nama* records the date of its writing as 1695 AD and mentions that it was written in Abchal Nagar Nander.<sup>639</sup> At that time (1695AD) Nander was not called Abchal Nagar and also in 1695AD the Guru was still in Anand Pur. This name became current only after Guru Gobind Singh’s death (1708 AD). Again since *Amrit Sanchar* happened in 1699 AD, how could a *Rehat Nama* appear four years earlier?

<sup>632</sup> ਸਮਤ ਸਤਰੁ ਸੁ ਬਾਵਨ, ਮੱਘਰ ਨੌਮੀ ਸੁਖ ਦਾਵਨ.

<sup>633</sup> ਦੂਸਰ ਰੂਪ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਾਨ ॥ ਆਪਣੇ ਅੰਗ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਰ ਮਾਨ ॥ (੬੧)

<sup>634</sup> “ਹੁਕਮ ਹੋਆ ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਿਪਰ ਜਾਤ ਹੁੰਸ ਰਾਏ ॥ ਨਿਕਟ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਲੀਓ ਕੰਠ ਲਗਾਏ ॥ The Guru says , ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖ ਗਵਾਰਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੨੭) ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰੀਅਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ and ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨਹ ਪੂਛੀਐ ਸਚ ਘਰੁ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਤਾਇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੩੦) ॥

<sup>635</sup> “Against this the Guru says, ਜਬ ਇਹ ਗਹੈ ਬਿਪਰਨ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ, ਮੈਂ ਨਾ ਕਰੋਂ ਇਨ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤ. (ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

<sup>636</sup> ਰਹਿਤ ਬਤਾਈਐ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਸੁਣੋ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦ (ਦੇਹਰਾ ਨੰਬਰ ੧੩)

<sup>637</sup> ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਗਿਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਕੀਨੀ ॥ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਤੁਮ ਲਿਖੇ ਨਵੀਨੀ ॥ The use of phrases like ਕਰੋ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ and ਬੀਰਜ ਮਲੇਸ਼ ਕੋ etc used in this *Rehat Nanaa* cannot be the direct words of Guru Gobind Singh.

<sup>638</sup> “ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੁਖਵਾਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦ ਲਾਲ ਦਰਿਆਈ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਥਾਇ”

<sup>639</sup> “ਅਬਚਲ ਨਗਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਆ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ॥ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕਰਤਾਰ”। “ਸਮਤ ਸਤਰਾ ਸੈ ਭਏ ਬਰਸ ਬਵੰਜਾ ਨਿਹਾਰ ॥ ਮਾਘ ਵਦੀ ਬਿਤ ਪੰਚਮੀ ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਸੂਭ ਵਾਰ ॥

### 3. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Dya Singh

(i) Bhai Daya Singh was one of the five *Pyaras* and yet he writes that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the goddess.<sup>640</sup> Guru Granth Sahib says, “Why worship gods and goddesses, O Siblings of Destiny? What can we ask of them? What can they give us? The stone gods are washed with water, O Siblings of Destiny, but they just sink in the water.”<sup>641</sup> This *Rehat Nama* also supports the wearing of a *Janeu*, which Guru Nanak had rejected at a very early age.

(ii) Dya Singh mentions Abchal Nagar in his *Rehat Nama*.<sup>642</sup> Dya Singh died in 1708 AD but by then Abchal Nangar Nander had not come to be known by its present name Abchal Nagar (which began much after Guru Gobind Singh’s death). Obviously somebody else must have written this *Rehat Nama* after Dya Singh’s death. Dya Singh was one of the five beloved ones. He could not have made this mistake.

(iii) This *Rehat Nama* states, “One should learn Panjabi and recite Gurbani and never learn Arabic and Persian. Being a Singh, he is forbidden from learning Sastri”. It is hard to believe that Dya Singh did not know about Guru Nanak’s and Guru Gobind Singh’s writings in Persian and had no knowledge of Guru Arjan Dev’s hymns in Sahskriti.<sup>643</sup>

(iv) Bhai Dya Singh died in 1708 AD but his *Rehat Nama* also records some later day incidents that happened after his death.

### 4. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Desa Singh<sup>644</sup>

This *Rehat Nama* appears to have been written towards the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. It recommends the use of opium and liquor.<sup>645</sup> Other *Rehat Namas* forbid the use of all intoxicants.

<sup>640</sup> “ਜਬ ਦੇਵੀ ਪਰਗਟ ਭਈ ਔਰ ਪਾਂਚ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਸਾਵਧਾਨ ਹੂਏ ਤਬ ਸਭ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਆਏ ।ਕੇਸ ਚੰਡੀ ਜੀ ਦੀਏ ਬਾਹਣੀ ਕੱਛ ਹਨੂਮਾਨ ਜੀ ਦਈ ।

<sup>641</sup> ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਾ ਪੂਜੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਕਿਆ ਮਾਗਉ ਕਿਆ ਦੇਹਿ ॥ ਪਾਹਨੁ ਨੀਰਿ ਪਖਾਲੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਬੁਡਹਿ ਤੇਹਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੭)

<sup>642</sup> “ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੋ ਔਰ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਜਾਏ, ਜਗਨ ਨਾਥ ਜਾਏ ਪਿਛੇ ਅਬਚਲ ਨਗਰ ਜਾਵੇ”

<sup>643</sup> “ਅਰਬੀ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਨ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ, ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋ ਕਰ ਸ਼ਾਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਨਾ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਬਾਮਣੋਂ ਕੇ ਪਖਯ ਮੇਂ ਤਤਪਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਛੂਛਾ ਮੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਛੁਟ ਜਾਏਗੀ ॥ “ਜੋ ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਭੋਗੇ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ, ਨਾ ਮੇਂ ਉਹਦਾ ਨਾ ਵਹਿ ਮੇਰਾ” (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੭)

<sup>644</sup> Some historians believe that Desa Singh was the youngest of the 10 sons of Bhai Mani Singh.

<sup>645</sup> “ਚਤੀ ਅਫੀਮ ਜੋ ਮਾਸਾ ਭੰਗ, ਇਨਕੋ ਖਾਵੈ ਕਦੀ ਨਿਸੰਗ” (੩੧). ਰਣ ਮੈ ਚਲੇ ਤੇ ਮਦਰਾ ਸੇਵੇ॥ ਅਵਰ ਦਿਵਸ ਕਹੂੰ ਨਾਮ ਨਾ ਲੇਵੈ (੪੫)

## 5. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Sahib Singh

Researchers tell us that *Bhai Sahib Singh* wrote *Sau Sakhi* in 1791 AD. It contains the two *Rehat Namas* known as '*Rehat Nama* and *Mukatnama*. Bhai Sahib Singh forbids the study of Arabic and Persian languages and tells the Sikhs not to serve under anybody.<sup>646</sup> The writer appears to be ignorant of the fact that Guru Nanak wrote some hymns in Persian and Guru Gobind Singh wrote the whole of his *Zafar Nama* in Persian. The Guru's court poet the Great Sikh scholar Bhai Nand Lal wrote most of his books in Persian.

## 6. *Rehat Nama* Bhai Chaupa Singh.

Bhai Chaupa Singh was the nurse of Guru Gobind Singh. Strangely his *Rehat Nama* states, "If a Sikh is employed by the Muslim Government he is free from all restrictions of the Sikh *Rehat*."

It is clear from the language and the contents of these *Rehat Namas* that they have been written by some non-Sikhs after the death of Banda Singh when the Sikhs reverted to the jungles and there was nobody to check their authenticity or challenge it. Here and there some writings are directly associated with Guru Gobind Singh. Dasam Granth, Sarab Loh and Prem Sumarg are three such writings. The nineteenth century writers like Bhai Santokh Singh, Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu accepted most of these fake writings as authentic without detecting the interpolations and made use of them in their writings causing more problems. Some *Rehat Namas* even talk of *Sikh Raj*.

For a Sikh the Guru's word recorded in the Holy Granth Sahib is more important than any thing said or written by anybody else even if that somebody was a member of the Guru's own family (Prithi Chand, Dhir Mal and Ram Rai etc). The available *Rehat Namas* are not credible.<sup>647</sup>

## 11. The Sikhs recite a *Shabad* which means that "God fulfils all the desires we ask for" How can this be true?

There are indeed many *Shabads*, which say more or less the same thing. Obviously God does not grant everything we ask for. If that were so nobody would work and nobody would be poor. When verses are taken

<sup>646</sup> . "ਅਰਬੀ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਅਖਰ ਨਾ ਪਵਹਿ, ਮੇਰਾ ਸਿਖ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਨਾ ਕਰਹਿ ॥ (੧੦)

<sup>647</sup> ਜੇ ਵਚਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਤਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਵੇ, ਸੋਈ ਸੁਣੇ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ, ਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਵਚਨ ਨਾ ਸੁਣੇ (ਭਗਤ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਟੀਕਾ ੧੪ਵੀਂ ਪਉੜੀ )

out of context the beauty of the hymns is lost and we deduce wrong conclusions.

Let us first of all try to understand what is meant in religious terminology for begging (ਮੰਗਣਾ), beseeching or asking for. There are only two things humans can ask for or beg. They can either ask for worldly comforts or they can ask for spiritual enlightenment. God is our father.<sup>648</sup> Like our worldly father He is very kind and provides us with everything we need.<sup>649</sup> However, like our worldly father, there are certain things He would decline to provide us. For example a child may love to catch a burning coal, which he likes, but a worldly father will not let him do so. Again, a young son may ask to be permitted to use drugs but his father will not permit because he knows that drugs can be harmful for his child. The father may decline to give even simple everyday things to an idle and never-do-well son because he does not work for them and therefore does not deserve them. In other words we can say that the father provides everything but the children have to deserve and expect to get only those things, which are not harmful for them. Those who ask for worldly comforts and deserve them, they certainly get them from God.

Gurbani is a guide for spiritual uplift of the humans. It talks about those devotees who make spiritual demands. Every verse in Gurbani that talks of the demands being met, talks about some condition attached to it for the spiritual traveller. For example

1. ਜੋ ਮਾਗਉ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਵਉ ਅਪਨੇ ਖਸਮ ਭਰੋਸਾ ॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੂਰਾ ਭੋਟਿਓ ਮਿਟਿਓ ਸਗਲ ਅੰਦੋਸਾ (੬੧੯)

“Whatever I ask for, I receive; I have total faith in my Master. Says Nanak, I have met with the Perfect Guru, and all my fears have been dispelled”(AGGS P.619)

2. ਜੋ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਸੇਵਿ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਚਰਣ ਰਸਾਇਣ ॥ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਹਰੂ ਤੇ ਛੂਟਹਿ ਭਵਜਲੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਤਰਾਇਣ ॥ ਖੋਜਤ ਖੋਜਤ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਿਓ ਦਾਸ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਪਰਾਇਣ ॥ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਖੋਮ ਚਾਹਹਿ ਜੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਦਾ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੧੪)

“Whatever I ask for, I receive; I have completely submitted to the Lord the source of nectar. I am released from the bondage of birth and death, and so I cross over the terrifying world-ocean. Searching and seeking, I have come to understand the essence of reality; the slave of the Lord of

<sup>648</sup> ਪਿਤਾ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਨੀ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੮੬)

<sup>649</sup> ਪਿਤਾ ਕਿਰਪਾਲਿ ਆਗਿਆ ਇਹ ਦੀਨੀ ਬਾਰਿਕੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਮਾਂਗੈ ਸੋ ਦੇਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੬੬)

the Universe is dedicated to Him. If you desire eternal bliss, O Nanak, ever remember the Lord in meditation.” (AGGS P.714)

3. ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਰਾਖੇ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ॥ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਾਇ ਅਵਗੁਣ ਸਭਿ ਮੇਟੇ ਦਇਆਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਬਖਸੰਦ ॥  
ਜੋ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਤੇ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਵੈ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸੁ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਬੋਲੈ ਈਹਾ ਊਹਾ ਸਚੁ  
ਹੋਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੧)

“The Guru, the Lord of the Universe, has saved the Lord’s humble servant. Hugging me close in His embrace, the merciful, forgiving Lord has erased all my sins. Whatever I ask for from my Lord and Master, he gives that to me. Whatever the Lord’s slave Nanak utters with his mouth is true, here and hereafter.”

It should be clear by now that meeting the demands in Gurbani refers to the demand made by those who opt for spiritual beatitude. There remains hardly any difference between such people and God when He meets all their demands.<sup>650</sup> Since they are ever blissfully remembering God, they advise the others to do the same and instead of asking for worldly pleasures seek spiritual glory. The Guru therefore advises that if you do have to ask God for something then ask for spiritual uplift.

1. ਮਾਗਨਾ ਮਾਗਨੁ ਨੀਕਾ ਹਰਿ ਜਸੁ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਮਾਗਨਾ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੧੮)

“If you must beg then know what to beg — it is noble to beg for the Lord’s Praise from the Guru.”

2. ਜਉ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਤਉ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਬੀਆ ॥ ਜਾ ਤੇ ਕੁਸਲ ਨ ਕਾਹੂ ਬੀਆ ॥ ਮਾਗਨਿ ਮਾਗ ਤ ਏਕਹਿ ਮਾਗ  
॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਾ ਤੇ ਪਰਹਿ ਪਰਾਗ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੫੮)

“Whenever you ask for something, you ask for worldly things; no one has obtained happiness from these. If you must ask for a gift, then ask for the One Lord. O Nanak, by Him, you shall be saved.”

3. ਮਾਗਉ ਦਾਨੁ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਿਧਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਮੁਖੁ ਸਾਕਤ ਸੰਗਿ ਨ ਜੁਟਸੀ ਰੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੫)

---

<sup>650</sup> ਪਿਤਾ ਪੁਤ ਏਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਲੀਨੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੪੧) ਪਿਤਾ ਪੁਤ ਰਲਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਾਂਝ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੪੧)

“I beg this blessing of You, O Merciful Lord, ocean of mercy — please, don’t bring me face to face with the faithless cynics.”(AGGS P.535)

4. ਮਾਗਉ ਦਾਨੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਨਾਮ ॥ ਅਵਰੁ ਕਛੂ ਮੇਰੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਨ ਚਾਲੈ ਮਿਲੈ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਮ ॥ ਰਾਜੁ ਮਾਲੁ ਅਨੇਕ ਭੋਗ ਰਸ ਸਗਲ ਤਰਵਰ ਕੀ ਛਾਮ ॥ ਧਾਇ ਧਾਇ ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਕਉ ਧਾਵੈ ਸਗਲ ਨਿਰਾਰਥ ਕਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਅਵਰੁ ਜੇ ਚਾਹਉ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਗਲ ਬਾਤ ਹੈ ਖਾਮ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੧੩)

“I beg for the Gift of Your Name, O my Lord and Master. Nothing else shall go along with me in the end; by Your Grace, please allow me to sing Your glorious praises. Power, wealth, various pleasures and enjoyments, all are just like the shadow of a tree. Man runs endlessly around in many directions, but all of his pursuits are useless. Except for the Lord of the Universe, everything he desires is transitory.” (AGGS P.713)

5. ਮਾਗਉ ਰਾਮ ਤੇ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਨੁ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਸਿਮਰਉ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੨)

“I beg for one gift only from the Lord. May all my desires be fulfilled, meditating on, and remembering Your Name, O Lord.” (AGGS P. 682)

As a matter of fact when the devotee reaches a certain stage of spirituality he becomes desire less.

ਮਾਗਹਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਇ ਇਹ ਭਿਖਿਆ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਕਉ ਕੁਰਬਾਣੈ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੬)

THE END

The following wording is to be printed on the outside of the outer cover

For the following FREE literature on Sikhism please write to the address given at the end.

1. A Challenge to Sikhism
2. Sikh Religion and Christianity
3. Sikh Religion and Islam
4. Sikh Religion and Science
5. Sikh Religion and Women
6. Panjab and panjabi
7. The Sikh Marriage ceremony.
8. Introduction to Sikhism
9. The Sikh Greetings
10. The Concepts of Sikh Religion

Available from:- G.S.Sidhu  
116 Waltham Close,  
West Bridgford.  
Nottingham. NG2 6LE  
Tel:- 00 44 (0) 115 981 9902  
[gssidhu30@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gssidhu30@yahoo.co.uk)